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RUNNING at top speed, one could scarcely keep pace with political developments this week. People have often talked of a political kaleidoscope, but seldom with so much justification, for politicians of every camp are changing not only their position but, in some cases, their colour too. Sir Charles Trevelyan has resigned, so has Sir Oswald Mosley; the Tory confusion has reached a laughable point at St. George's, and Sir John Simon, whose future must now surely be in the Tory Party, has declared himself not only an "economy" merchant, but also some sort of Protectionist. The old type of Free Trade opinion, indeed, is losing ground so rapidly that the clear-cut division between Free Trader and Protectionist may soon cease to be a dividing line between parties, though the rival types of State interference in international trade will no doubt make an almost equally good battle-ground. Meanwhile the Government carries on, accepting spectacular reverses in domestic policy—the Trade Disputes Bill has gone the same way as the Education Bill—and making even more spectacular successes abroad. Few British Foreign Ministers have ever made so dramatic and, as appears from all we know at present, so admirable an intervention in European politics as Mr. Henderson's this week, while the truce in India, which creates an atmosphere in which a genuine settlement has a chance, has roused fury among the Die-hards and given new impetus to the Baldwin Must Go movement. Which means that the moral of the whole story is that it has become really important to keep the Government in power lest its work in India and in the sphere of disarmament should be undone.

* * *

It is long since we have had such good news from India as the report of the agreement between Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi. At the time of writing the exact terms are not known, but there seems to be no doubt about the main heads. There have been, as there were bound to be, some concessions on either side. The right of salt making will be allowed to those who live on the sea coast. The boycott of foreign goods will—or may—continue, but it will not be used as a political weapon, and picketing will be peaceful. Some arrangements will be made about the restoration of confiscated property. The Mahatma has dropped his demand that the police should be put in the dock. So far as a general amnesty of prisoners is concerned, the Viceroy apparently insists—and rightly so—that this must be conditional on the calling off of the whole civil disobedience movement. The prospect of a settlement has spread a feeling of immense relief throughout India, and it is confidently assumed that the Congress leaders will now be ready to co-operate with the Round Table Conference. Of

course, there is still a long and difficult task ahead; but that does not detract from the value of this first step. Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi share equally in the honours of this victory for common sense.

* * *

Our Die-hard Tories, as was to be expected, are furious. In their view the agreement is a disaster, an abject surrender of British rights, an incitement to the forces of murder and sedition. We do not attach great importance to the vulgar abuse of Gandhi and the Viceroy in which Lord Rothermere's newspapers are indulging themselves, nor to the alarm which seems to have seized upon a certain number of more decent people. We hope and believe that the Conservative Party as such will keep its head, and recognise that a courageous and generous policy is the only possible policy in India to-day. It is unthinkable that we should go back on the decisions of the Round Table; to do that would be the surest way of making our position in India untenable. Mr. Baldwin is being badgered by a section of his party to throw over the Viceroy and the Government of India, and in effect to abdicate in favour of Mr. Churchill. Mr. Baldwin is not always as firm as a rock, but he is not likely to be as weak as this. He believes in Lord Irwin and he has been well justified in his belief. If he snaps his fingers at the Die-hards one hopes that he will find support from the main body of his followers, who, though they may be anxious about the future in India, are not all still living in the nineteenth century. If he is driven out of office on the issue of India it will be the most creditable incident in his career, but a bad day for England and the Empire.

* * *

Sir Oswald Mosley has resigned with a handful of followers, a manifesto and a promise of a new party with 400 candidates. His action at this stage even more than his manifesto seems to cut him off from the Labour Party for many a long day, and speculation is naturally rife as to the source from which he hopes to draw his money and his candidates. A national organisation is not made in a minute and, in view of the strong protectionist and imperialistic flavour of his manifesto, an alliance with Lord Beaverbrook has been suggested as a possible development. A much better guess is that Sir Oswald Mosley intends to link up with the party which Sir William Morris and his friends talked of some time ago and then as suddenly ceased to talk of. The Mosley manifesto itself is an interesting, but in some important respects an ambiguous document. There are, of course, political advantages in ambiguity. If, for instance, the new corporations which are to run industry are to be State-controlled, that would be a long step towards Socialism and, one expects, a long step away from Sir William Morris. If they are to be, in effect, private trusts, they would naturally appeal to conservative business men. At present Sir Oswald's new party merely means another side-show like the Empire Crusade and the United Empire Party, and, like them, it is more likely to draw votes from Mr. Baldwin than from Mr. MacDonald.

* * *

Politically speaking, Sir Charles Trevelyan's resignation is not important. He has laboured continually for his Education Bill and been defeated. Once the golden opportunity of the Government's first few months in office was wasted—and the Bill would have passed almost as an agreed measure then—only a tactful and popular Minister, supported by great enthusiasm in the country, could have brought the religious groups to an agreement. All these things have been lacking. The electoral enthusiasm for educational reorganisation has somewhat declined. Sir Charles is not a good diplomatist, and he has become unpopular with the Labour rank and file. His resignation was greeted with marked silence; even his Parthian shot at the Government, which he accuses, quite fairly, of being supine and unconstructive in home affairs, failed to arouse excitement. Perhaps this was partly because Sir Charles has not, during this Government, appeared as a strong advocate of an advanced domestic policy. It would have been just as well if he had confined himself to saying that, since his Bill was dead, he preferred to retire from the unequal contest, though there is at least a chance that the Government will reopen the negotiations for a religious concordat and launch a fresh challenge to the Lords with a new Bill. Meanwhile Mr. Lees-Smith, taking Sir Charles's place, is left with the dead baby.

* * *

The White King had two messengers—one to come and one to go. On somewhat the same principle, Conservatives, at by-elections, are tending to produce two candidates. The position in St. George's, Westminster, bids fair to outdo East Islington; for one thing, some sort of Conservative is certain to be returned, so the prize is well worth competing for. The local caucus is said to have interviewed a number of aspirants, among others, Sir James Erskine, Sir William Ray, and Sir Edward Grigg; but while these gentlemen were still waiting on the mat, the "great industrialist," Sir E. Petter, came forward as an Independent. It is not yet clear if this stalwart has crusading affinities, or if he is content with the importance of being Ernest. His appearance frightened the caucus, which has once again gone into Committee; some say that they have found a new candidate; others, that a second short-list is in preparation. One rumour is that Mr. H. G. Williams has been summoned from South Paddington, where he has been keeping an eye on Admiral Taylor; another suggests that Mr. Baldwin may contest the seat, with a view to disclosing whether he really has a policy. Mr. Baldwin has other views, and it is now rumoured that Mr Duff Cooper is being favourably considered, but the candidate we favour ourselves is Strube.

* * *

The withdrawal of the Trade Disputes Bill was really inevitable from the moment when the Liberals showed their intention both drastically to amend the opening clause and to insist on the retention of "contracting-in." For, with "contracting-in" retained the Bill has lost its point for the Labour Party, which desires to revert to the procedure of the Liberal Act of 1913; and, with the Liberal amendment to clause one included, it is positively dangerous to the Trade Unions, which would be actually worse off under it than they are under the Baldwin Act of 1927. The Liberals on the Standing Committee may protest that their sole desire has been to protect the rights of the community. But

what are these rights, and is it possible to devise a form of words that will give them legal protection without at the same time practically denying workers in the vital services the right to strike? Certainly no one has yet suggested a form of words that would achieve this result; and it is not surprising that the Trade Unions would rather lose the Bill than accept the Liberal amendment. It is now being suggested that the Government should bring forward a single-clause Bill, merely repealing the Act of 1927. But would the Liberals vote for this? It is believed that they would not. The *impasse* seems to be complete; and the Liberals must expect to encounter strong Trade Unionist animosity on account of their attitude.

* * *

After a protracted wrangle on procedure—a perfect example of how to waste Parliamentary time—the House of Commons embarked last Wednesday on the Committee stage of the Electoral Reform Bill. The discussion of the Bill is necessarily being conducted in an atmosphere of almost total unreality. For this there are two reasons. In the first place, the survival rate of Government Bills is at the moment exceptionally low. In the path of the present measure lie the mangled corpses of the Education and Trade Disputes Bills, horrible warnings of the unkindnesses of fate. In the second place, the Electoral Reform Bill has very few sincere friends. Half a jest and half a gesture, it is the hesitant symbol of the uneasy ties that bind the two Left-wing parties. Labour views it contemptuously; the Liberals in Parliament are—for obvious reasons—the very Liberals to whom the alternative vote makes only a limited appeal; and the Conservative Party (with characteristic shortsightedness) is opposed to the whole measure. The most interesting feature of the debates is the barrage of nonsense that is being put up in defence of the Universities vote. This defence is based on two related assumptions—the one, that the Universities vote represents the Universities; the other, that these bodies are the repositories of political wisdom. Neither of these assumptions is valid.

* * *

Once more Moscow is being delighted with the entertainment of a propagandist trial. This time the accused are not professors but Socialists. Otherwise, the trial has the same features as the Ramzin affair of a few weeks ago. The real accused are not the men who are standing in the dock to-day and who have come forward with what look very like bogus confessions, but the Russian Mensheviks abroad, the English, French, German and Belgian members of the Second International, and, indeed, all Socialists who do not share the Bolshevik view and who, therefore, fall into the category of "capitalist-slaves," "hired agents of Deterding," and "fomentors of the anti-Soviet war." For the trial the Bolshevik press has coined the new word of "Socialist-Interventionist." The trial itself is an interesting study in Bolshevik psychology. Its obvious object is to impress upon the Russian people the dangers of foreign intervention, and no doubt it also helps to distract attention from existing hardships. This stage-managed exposure is meant to be both an excuse and an incentive—an excuse for the delays and shortcomings in the execution of the Five Year Plan and an incentive to greater efforts. The danger of foreign intervention is part of the Bolshevik creed. They certainly desire to accelerate the Five Year Plan. And in comparison with this aim the innocence or guilt of the accused is a trifling matter. With the Bolshevik State, as with Western States in their autocratic days, *raison d'état* is the final argument. Nor do the Bolsheviks care on this occasion for foreign opinion. These trials are for home consumption only.

* * *

The Charing Cross Bridge scheme has come back from the committee to which it was referred last year, amended but not substantially altered. The case is one in which complete agreement will evidently never be secured; for every amateur, as well as every professional architect and civil engineer, has his own private ideas about what ought to be done. In the circumstances, a surprising amount of agreement has been secured on a committee consisting largely of sponsors and known backers of different schemes. There is a clear majority in favour of the scheme finally recommended, and several other members put it second, preferring only their own pet plans. The new scheme involves the removal of Charing Cross Station and Hungerford Bridge, and the building of a new road bridge and of a high-level station south of the river. But it has removed some of the objections which caused the defeat of the Bill last year, especially by reducing greatly the need for long road tunnels, and by the creation of a new traffic circus on the south side. In its amended form, the scheme should effectively open the way for the development and beautification of a large tract of South London. It is to be hoped that this time the Bill will be passed, and the work be allowed to begin. We have wasted time enough; and we are hardly likely to get a better plan than that the committee now recommends.

* * *

A municipal scandal of unusual magnitude was revealed a few days ago at Nottingham Assizes, when Leonard Ball, an official in the Corporation's gas department, and eight local tradesmen were found guilty of having defrauded the Nottingham Borough Council of sums amounting to at least £67,900. The frauds were perpetrated over a period of ten years. The method employed was a simple one. Bogus invoices were sent in by the tradesmen for goods which had not been supplied, and these were passed for payment by Ball. By this unoriginal device the ratepayers of Nottingham have been persuaded for nearly a decade to supplement Ball's modest salary of £300 a year by an amount equal to the produce of a penny rate. That, of course, may be regarded as Nottingham's own affair. But two aspects of the matter concern the whole country. The first is that frauds of this kind—and in recent years there have been several—will certainly continue until a proper system of impartial recruitment and educational qualification is introduced into the municipal service. A Departmental Committee is considering the matter, and will, we hope, recognise the close connection which invariably exists between patronage and corruption. The other aspect concerns the audit. The Nottingham frauds could never have occurred with an even moderately intelligent system of audit. Nottingham, like almost all borough councils, relies on an absurd system whereby two of the borough auditors are elected by the ratepayers and a third one is appointed by the Mayor. Borough auditors are usually without qualifications or experience. This system embodies all the worst features of pseudo-democracy with none of the advantages of popular control. Even when it is reinforced by calling in professional accountants, as in Nottingham, such a system cannot hope to safeguard the public interest. The reform of municipal audit is badly needed.

ANOTHER HAPPY ENDING

WHEN the Naval Conference broke up last April, Mr. MacDonald said very justly that the treaty which was signed was not the end of a volume, but the end of a chapter. It was, on the whole, a happy ending—but just how happy would depend on the next chapter. And about this no one conversant with the facts could feel anything but the gravest anxiety. There was a deadlock between France and Italy over the claims to parity of fleets. The two Powers faced one another in a mood of intransigence, and indeed of truculence, and so long as this lasted no good European could sleep sound o' nights. Nor even could the gain of the London Conference be counted secure. For unless and until the Three Power Agreement reached between the United States, Japan and Great Britain became a Five Power Agreement, the promised limitation of armaments must be highly precarious. And now, with dramatic suddenness, Mr. Henderson has presented us with a happy ending to this chapter of doubts and fears. He has come back from the Continent with a victory, whose importance can hardly be exaggerated, for common sense and peace. It is a triumph of conciliation, in which the prestige and skill of the British Foreign Secretary were the final and decisive factors. No doubt the moment was favourable for the intervention of the "honest broker." Not only had the patient spade-work of Mr. Craigie and the other experts gone a long way towards the composing of differences, but the economic pinch in Italy evidently made Signor Mussolini more disposed for a settlement. But to say this is not to depreciate the service that Mr. Henderson has performed. To seize the favourable moment is no small part of the art of statesmanship, and in this delicate and risky business Mr. Henderson has once again shown his quality. For the details and the figures of the agreement we must wait till the First Lord of the Admiralty makes his statement, which should be early next week. Meanwhile we may be content to acclaim what really counts —the political achievement. It is by far the biggest achievement in the realm of international affairs since the London treaty of ten months ago, and perhaps it will prove to be the biggest since Locarno.

The naval rivalry of France and Italy had, of course, begun long before the London Conference; it was in full blast in 1924. Under the French naval statute of that year provision was made for the building of 160 new ships of war, and this had stimulated the ambitions and the efforts of Fascist Italy. Very soon after the Conference last year an ambitious programme was formulated in Rome, comprising submarines as well as powerful cruisers to counter the French super-submarines. France, in her fear of the German "pocket battleships," was planning several 23,000-ton battle-cruisers armed with twelve 13.4 inch guns. Italy announced a Roland for the French Oliver. Nor were land bases forgotten. France proposed to mount long-range guns at Ajaccio and elsewhere in Corsica and in Tunis; Italy would have torpedo and air-stations in Sicily and Sardinia. In short, throughout last summer and autumn, whilst Signor Grandi was suggesting "naval holidays," his Admiralty was vying with the French Admiralty in projects for consecrating the Mediterranean to the God of War. How much of all this could be written down as bluff we do not know. Neither France nor Italy is anxious to pour out millions on naval armaments. But pride and jealousy and fear will drive nations and their Governments to incredible follies, and nobody could afford to laugh at the peril of a new and disastrous competition in armaments between the two Mediterranean Powers. Nor could the rest of us—especially in the British Empire—shrug our shoulders about the Mediterranean, or suppose that France and Italy might be left to stew in their own juice. Our juice would soon be mixed with theirs in the event of a Franco-Italian conflict; for even if by a miracle we could keep out of it our communications and our commerce would be instantly and disastrously deranged. And, of course, any substantial increase of the French navy would be the signal for an increase of the British navy—and then presumably of the American and Japanese—under the "escalator clause" of the London Treaty. Nor is this the whole tale of the fears of 1930. Franco-Italian rivalry has not been an affair merely of the Admiralties. War Offices and Foreign Offices have also had their fingers in the pie, and one of the most alarming developments has been the prospect of a *rapprochement* between Italy and a Francophobe Germany, with the aim, or at least the grave risk, of a division of Europe into two contending factions—France and her satellites on the one hand, Italy with Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, and perhaps Russia, on the other. We do not say, of course, that such a calamity was imminent; we do say that prudent men had to reckon on it as a possibility. And it is from this, and from other lesser but still formidable anxieties, that we hope and believe the agreement which Mr. Henderson has brought home with him has rescued us.

The question has naturally been asked, whether any price, and if so what, has been paid for this agreement. It has been asked—and answered rather ominously—in the French press. The journalists of Paris have tumbled over one another in proclaiming the revival of the Entente Cordiale. Some have hinted at pledges on the part of Great Britain to keep the peace in the Mediterranean, or, if not that, then to support the French case in land armaments. Others (and this indeed is more credible) say that Signor Mussolini has got some promise of financial help in return for his accommodation. A French loan to Italy is, in all the circumstances, likely enough, and it would be quite unexceptionable. But there is not the slightest reason that we can see for believing the suggestions about British pledges. To believe them, indeed, would be to disbelieve Mr. Henderson, who has emphatically denied that he has given any. And as for the Entente Cordiale, if that means that our policy will be to maintain friendly relations with France, nobody will quarrel with it. If it means, or is supposed to mean, anything more—anything in the nature of a special and exclusive affection for France—then it is unthinkable. The Labour Government have given sufficient evidence of their loyalty to the League to put them above suspicion in this matter. And no British Government, we are

confident, would have the support of public opinion in an attempt to revert to a policy which in the conditions of to-day could have only a sinister significance.

We assume, therefore, that there is no bargain, pledge, pact or promise on our part concealed behind the Franco-Italian agreement. We welcome it with feelings of profound relief, for it clears away a cloud that threatened to break in a storm of mischief. We have only one question ourselves to ask about it. Will it give a fresh inspiration and impetus to the General Disarmament Conference which is to meet next February? Will the figures of the French and Italian navies that are agreed upon now be treated then, not as irreducible minima, but as open to still further reduction—together, of course, with our own and other people's? If the answer to that question is "Yes," it will augur well for all-round reductions likewise in land and air armaments, which are no less urgent—which are indeed even more urgent—than naval limitations. We have had as yet no assurance on this point, and it is improbable that we shall get it in any explicit form. But we have good grounds for hope that the next chapter will open as happily as this one has ended.

PROPOSALS FOR A REVENUE TARIFF

By J. M. KEYNES

DO you think it a paradox that we can continue to increase our capital wealth by adding both to our foreign investments and to our equipment at home, that we can continue to live (most of us) much as usual or better, and support at the same time a vast body of persons in idleness with a dole greater than the income of a man in full employment in most parts of the world—and yet do all this with one quarter of our industrial plant closed down and one quarter of our industrial workers unemployed? It would be not merely a paradox, but an impossibility, if our potential capacity for the creation of wealth were not much greater than it used to be. But this greater capacity does exist. It is to be attributed mainly to three factors—the ever-increasing technical efficiency of our industry (I believe that output per head is 10 per cent. greater than it was even so recently as 1924), the greater economic output of women, and the larger proportion of the population which is at the working period of life. The fall in the price of our imports compared with that of our exports also helps. The result is that with three-fourths of our industrial capacity we can now produce as much wealth as we could produce with the whole of it a few years ago. But how rich we could be if only we could find some way of employing *four*-fourths of our capacity to-day!

Our trouble is, then, not that we lack the physical means to support a high standard of life, but that we are suffering a breakdown in organisation and in the machinery by which we buy and sell to one another.

There are two reactions to this breakdown. We experience the one or the other according to our temperaments. The one is inspired by a determination to maintain our standards of life by bringing into use our wasted capacity—that is to say, to expand, casting fear and even prudence away. The other, the instinct to contract, is based on the psychology of fear. How reasonable is it to be afraid?

We live in a society organised in such a way that the activity of production depends on the individual business man hoping for a reasonable profit or, at least, to avoid an actual loss. The margin which he requires as his necessary incentive to produce may be a very small proportion of the total value of the product. But take this away from him and the whole process stops. This, unluckily, is just what has happened. The fall of prices relatively to costs, together with the psychological effect of high taxation, has destroyed the necessary incentive to production. This is at the root of our disorganisation. It may be unwise, therefore, to frighten the business man or torment him further. A forward policy is liable to do this. For reasoning by a false analogy from what is prudent for an individual who finds himself in danger of living beyond his means, he is usually, when his nerves are frayed, a supporter, though to his own ultimate disadvantage, of national contraction.

And there is a further reason for nervousness. We are suffering from *international* instability. Notoriously the competitive power of our export trades is diminished by our high standard of life. At the same time the lack of profits in home business inclines the investor to place his money abroad, whilst high taxation exercises a sinister influence in the same direction. Above all, the reluctance of other creditor countries to lend (which is the root-cause of this slump) places too heavy a financial burden on London. These, again, are apparent arguments against a forward policy; for greater activity at home due to increased employment will increase our excess of imports, and Government borrowing may (in their present mood) frighten investors.

Thus the *direct* effect of an expansionist policy must be to cause Government borrowing, to throw some burden on the Budget and to increase our excess of imports. In every way, therefore—the opponents of such a policy point out—it will aggravate the want of confidence, the burden of taxation and the international instability, which, they believe, are at the bottom of our present troubles.

At this point the opponents of expansion divide into two groups—those who think that we must not only postpone all ideas of expansion, but must positively contract, by which they mean reduce wages and make large economies in the existing expenditure of the Budget, and those who are entirely negative and, like Mr. Snowden, dislike the idea of contraction (interpreted in the above sense) almost as much as they dislike the idea of expansion.

The policy of negation, however, is really the most dangerous of all. For, as time goes by, it becomes increasingly doubtful whether we *can* support our standard of life. With 1,000,000 unemployed we certainly can; with 2,000,000 unemployed we probably can; with 3,000,000 unemployed we probably cannot. Thus the negative policy by allowing unemployment steadily to increase must lead in the end to an unanswerable demand for a reduction in our standard of life. If we do nothing long enough, there will in the end be nothing else that we can do.

Unemployment, I must repeat, exists because employers have been deprived of profit. The loss of profit may be due to all sorts of causes. But, short of going over to Communism, there is no possible means of curing unemployment except by restoring to employers a proper margin of profit. There are two ways of doing this—by increasing the *demand* for output, which is the expansionist cure, or by decreasing the *cost* of output, which is the contractionist cure. Both of these try to touch the spot. Which of them is to be preferred?

To decrease the cost of output by reducing wages and curtailing Budget services may indeed increase foreign demand for our goods (unless, which is quite likely, it encourages a similar policy of contraction abroad), but it will probably diminish the domestic demand. The advantages to employers of a *general* reduction of wages are, therefore, not so great as they look. Each employer sees the advantage to himself of a reduction of the wages which he himself pays, and overlooks both the consequences of the reduction of the incomes of his customers and of the reduction of wages which his competitors will enjoy. Anyway, it would certainly lead to social injustice and violent resistance, since it would greatly benefit some classes of income at the expense of others. For these reasons a policy of contraction

sufficiently drastic to do any real good may be quite impracticable.

Yet the objections to the expansionist remedy—the instability of our international position, the state of the Budget and the want of confidence—cannot be thus disposed of. Two years ago there was no need to be frightened. To-day it is a different matter. It would not be wise to frighten the penguins and arouse these frigid creatures to flap away from our shores with their golden eggs inside them. A policy of expansion sufficiently drastic to be useful might drive us off the gold standard. Moreover, two years ago the problem was mainly a British problem; to-day it is mainly international. No domestic cure to-day can be adequate by itself. An international cure is essential; and I see the best hope of remedying the international slump in the leadership of Great Britain. But if Great Britain is to resume leadership, she must be strong and believed to be strong. It is of paramount importance, therefore, to restore full confidence in London. I do not believe that this is difficult; for the real strength of London is being underestimated to-day by foreign opinion, and the position is ripe for a sudden reversal of sentiment. For these reasons I, who opposed our return to the gold standard and can claim, unfortunately, that my Cassandra utterances have been partly fulfilled, believe that our exchange position should be relentlessly defended to-day, in order, above all, that we may resume the vacant financial leadership of the world, which no one else has the experience or the public spirit to occupy, speaking out of acknowledged strength and not out of weakness.

An advocate of expansion in the interests of domestic employment has cause, therefore, to think twice. I have thought twice, and the following are my conclusions.

I am of the opinion that a policy of expansion, though desirable, is not safe or practicable to-day, unless it is accompanied by other measures which would neutralise its dangers. Let me remind the reader what these dangers are. There is the burden on the trade balance, the burden on the Budget, and the effect on confidence. If the policy of expansion were to justify itself eventually by increasing materially the level of profits and the volume of employment, the net effect on the Budget and on confidence would in the end be favourable and perhaps very favourable. But this might not be the initial effect.

What measures are available to neutralise these dangers? A decision to reform the grave abuses of the dole, and a decision to postpone for the present all new charges on the Budget for social services in order to conserve its resources to meet schemes for the expansion of employment, are advisable and should be taken. But the main decision which seems to me to-day to be absolutely forced on any wise Chancellor of the Exchequer, whatever his beliefs about Protection, is the introduction of a substantial revenue tariff. It is certain that there is no other measure, all the immediate consequences of which will be favourable and appropriate. The tariff which I have in mind would include no discriminating protective taxes, but would cover as wide a field as possible at a flat rate or perhaps two flat rates, each applicable to wide categories of goods. Rebates would be allowed in respect of imported material entering into exports, but raw materials, which make up an important proportion of the value of exports, such as wool and cotton, would be exempt. The amount of revenue to be aimed at should be substantial, not less than £50,000,000 and, if possible, £75,000,000. Thus, for example, there might be import duties of 15 per cent. on all manufactured and semi-manufactured goods without exception and of 5 per cent. on all food stuffs and certain raw materials, whilst other raw materials would be exempt. I am prepared to to maintain that the effect of such duties on the cost of living would be insignificant—no greater than the existing fluctuation between one month and another. Moreover, any conceivable remedy for unemployment will have the effect, and, indeed, will be intended, to raise prices. Equally, the effect on the cost of our exports, after allowing for the rebates which should be calculated on broad and simple lines, would be very small. It should be the declared intention of the Free Trade parties acquiescing in this decision to remove the duties in the event of world prices recovering to the level of 1929.

Compared with any alternative which is open to us, this measure is unique in that it would at the same time relieve the pressing problems of the Budget and restore business confidence. I do not believe that a wise and prudent Budget can be framed to-day without recourse to a revenue tariff. But this is not its only advantage. In so far as it leads to the substitution of home-produced goods for goods previously imported, it will increase employment in this country. At the same time, by relieving the pressure on the balance of trade it will provide a much-needed margin to pay for the additional imports which a policy of expansion will require and to finance loans by London to necessitous debtor countries. In these ways, the buying power which we take away from the rest of the world by restricting certain imports we shall restore to it with the other hand. Some fanatical Free Traders might allege that the adverse effect of import duties on our exports would neutralise all this; but it would not be true.

Free Traders may, consistently with their faith, regard a revenue tariff as our iron ration, which can be used once only in emergency. The emergency has arrived. Under cover of the breathing space and the margin of financial strength thus afforded us, we could frame a policy and a plan, both domestic and international, for marching to the assault against the spirit of contractionism and fear.

If, on the other hand, Free Traders reject these counsels of expediency, the certain result will be to break the present Government and to substitute for it, in the confusion of a Crisis of Confidence, a Cabinet pledged to a full protectionist programme. I am not unaccustomed to being in a minority. But on this occasion I believe that 90 per cent. of my countrymen will agree with me.

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THE RETURN TO PROSPERITY, OR THE PRETENDED WAR

BY the end of 1935 the number of unemployed throughout the world had grown so considerably that it represented more than half of the population of every industrialised country. Things had become so bad that only banks, breweries and tobacco and match companies were paying dividends, and percipient parents were having their sons and daughters trained in accountancy and bankruptcy procedure.

The perturbed Premiers and Foreign Secretaries of Europe were assembled at Geneva for their annual Unemployment Congress. At one of the private meetings the British Socialist Prime Minister remarked:

"I heard a man say the other day that it was absurd for most of the people to go without boots when we had thousands of bootmakers unemployed, and dealers did not know what to do with their stocks of leather. He said it would be cheaper to put bootmakers to work and supply the people with boots than to pay them the dole for doing nothing. It struck me as a good idea, but my financial advisers tell me it is ridiculous."

"If one only dared tell the truth in public," remarked the Patagonian Premier, "what the world needs is another war."

"By heaven, you are right," said one of the company, after an embarrassed silence; "if only we could have one without the awful suffering it entails."

"Well, why not?" asked the originator of the suggestion. "Why not stage a pretended war with its advantages

and without its disadvantages? Our peoples would at least be properly clothed and fed, and there would certainly be a trade boom."

"But we should look awful fools, *pretending to have a war*," said another.

"Well, I would rather be laughed at than shot at," remarked one of the company who had hitherto been silent, and there were murmurs of assent.

"The whole thing is preposterous," said the British Prime Minister, "but I must admit it is equally preposterous that our countries are all being ruined and our populations impoverished because of our capacity to produce too much."

"Well, let us think it over," said the venerable doyen of the assembly.

* * * * *

Thus it came about that in the spring of 1936 the allied nations of the world entered upon a state of war with an unknown enemy. Treaties, as is usual, even in real wars, presented little difficulty. Some countries were, however, at first reluctant to join. Russia was inclined to think the whole affair a plot against herself until the other Powers offered to furnish her with an unlimited supply of munitions, when she very wisely decided to take machinery and manufactured goods instead. The United States Treasury was appalled at the prospect of having twenty million pensionable veterans on its hands for one hundred and fifty years, but came to the conclusion that it would save more than that by putting its racketeers into uniform and under martial law.

In England the difficulties were less than might have been expected. The Great Financial Authority pointed out that inflation would result, which meant ruin.

"When?" inquired the Prime Minister.

"In ten years at latest," replied the G.F.A.

"But haven't you told me that if we keep on the dole and other social services at their present rate we should be ruined in a couple of years?"

"Yes, and that is a fact," said the G.F.A.

"Well if I have to choose between being killed in 1938 or 1948, I choose the latter," was the answer.

The G.F.A. left the Presence, and telephoned an order to his broker to invest fifty thousand pounds in the lowest quoted iron and steel shares.

The co-operation of the millionaire press was assured by the promise of two dukedoms and an atrocities monopoly. The precedents established by the 1914-18 war proved useful. Voluntary conscription was reintroduced, and liberal separation and children's allowances were paid. The wheels of industry soon revolved at full speed, all government orders being given on the basis of cost, plus ten per cent. Orders for millions of uniforms and medals kept Yorkshire and Birmingham fully employed. The shipyards were working day and night, constructing both war and cargo vessels to replace those that might be destroyed. The demand for steel was enormous, and as coal supplies had to be built up at all the naval bases, and thousands of miners had been conscripted to build bomb and poison shelters in the big cities, unemployment in the coal areas was a thing of the past. The contract to feed the entire civil population was given to a syndicate consisting of the Co-operative Movement and J. Lyons and Co. This resulted in the construction of fifty huge bakeries and the extinction by purchase of ten thousand small uneconomic baking establishments. One half of the army was put to cultivating the soil and increasing home production of foodstuffs, whilst some hundreds of battalions were put to the task of constructing dwellings for the troops.

As similar measures were adopted in every country, the world's surplus stocks of materials were soon absorbed. The necessity of accumulating supplies against a possible blockade caused enormous purchases to be made from the wheat-growing countries, and restored prosperity and purchasing power to the impoverished farmers.

The financing of the war went fairly smoothly. On the initiative of the United States, all war and reparation debts between governments were cancelled. It was further agreed that it would be unseemly to insist upon cash payments for goods supplied to one another during a united struggle in a just cause, and that a settling of accounts could be made when (if ever) the war came to an end. As food was supplied to the civil population without payment, and half the nation was in uniform with only army pay, expenditure in terms of money was less astronomical in dimension than in the previous war. Victory Loans were, of course, issued, and every subscription over a certain amount carried with it a title or decoration according to the sum subscribed. A special tax was levied on unearned incomes, and the sur-tax was increased. No alteration was made in the terms of the existing national debt, except that sinking funds were suspended until the end of the war. As the importation of most luxuries was prohibited, and the amount of labour available for their manufacture was limited, prices of non-necessities rose appreciably, with a restrictive effect upon the purchasing power of the rentier class.

The war was conducted with a view to peace. The houses for the army were so made as ultimately to solve the housing problem. The bomb and poison shelters were so constructed as to form a network of traffic roads under the great cities. It was intended ultimately to scrap old and obsolete vessels and to replace them by the new ones. The accumulation of guns and war vessels became embarrassing, so it was decided to sink them in the English Channel as a foundation for a bridge between Dover and Calais.

In the year 1938, when this narrative closes, a party of High Financial Authorities and Orthodox Economists, accompanied by the Prime Minister, was making a tour of inspection of the country. The sight of so many hives of industry working at full speed, and a population visibly well fed and clothed, caused considerable perturbation to most of the visitors, and their leader exclaimed in anguished terms:

"The country is ruined!"

"It doesn't look like it to me," remarked the Prime Minister.

"Yes, but just wait till the end of the war," was the reply.

"Well, then, we had better let it go on," said the Prime Minister.

And at the time of writing, it looks as though the war would continue for another generation at least.

A. EMIL DAVIES.

MR. JUSTICE HOLMES

ON March 8th, Mr. Justice Holmes, of the American Supreme Court, celebrates his ninetieth birthday. For his fellow-countrymen, the event is rightly invested with a national significance; they realise that no man since Chief Justice Marshall has exercised so profound an influence on American law. But Englishmen, too, have some obligation to pay their meed of tribute to a great man and a great achievement. Mr. Justice Holmes stands with F. W. Maitland at the very head of the historians of the Common Law. Few books are entitled to be regarded as epoch-making; certainly his dissertations upon that theme began the scientific study of English legal history.

But Mr. Justice Holmes has not merely been a scholar. For almost fifty years on the bench he has been one of the outstanding liberal influences in American jurisprudence. He has shown how a great judge can use the gift of philosophic detachment to survey contemporary social problems from an eminence. He has done more than any other man to free the American courts from the accusation that the lawyer makes them the servile instruments of economic privilege and conservative principles. He has sought to make, and largely succeeded in making, the American con-

stitution an instrument more capable of adaptation to new social needs than its founders can ever have contemplated.

It is not that he has been a radical; if anything, his own temperament has been aristocratic and conservative. It is simply that he has consistently refused to make his private prejudices the parent of legal principle. He has insisted that, so long as the plain meaning of the constitution is not violated, the legislature has the right to experiment with the national destiny. He has been careful of individual freedom while he has safeguarded the right of the people to order its life in terms of new experience newly interpreted. The whole record of his judicial work is an admirable and outstanding example of creative jurisprudence.

And his personal influence has been hardly less remarkable. There are few eminent figures in American law to-day who do not eagerly acknowledge the inspiration they owe to him. His keen scepticism, his wide learning, his unending kindness, have made him to many, both in the Old World and the New, a kind of philosopher-king, on the anvil of whose mind many have sharpened their weapons. If law is becoming increasingly conscious of its social perspective, it is largely to him that it owes this insight. He has done for this generation, and within his sphere, something of what Montesquieu established for his time. We salute with pride a great adventurer who has served two generations in an heroic way.

THE MEANING

THOSE who defend bad grammar, and their numbers have increased in the present century, sometimes do so on the ground that all is well if the speaker is intelligible. "That's him," is undoubtedly as clear in its meaning as "That is he," and "The man whom he said was going to Edinburgh" leaves no room for misunderstanding. Grammar that imposes rules with any other object than that of making the meaning clearer, seems to the advocates of freedom as arbitrary as the Chinese etiquette of tea-drinking. They are equally impatient of the pedantic objections to the misuse of certain words such as "individual" and "phenomenal." They hold that, since no one could possibly misunderstand what is meant by "a seedy-looking individual" or "a phenomenal success," the dislike of such phrases is merely finicking, like the dislike of a tie of the wrong colour at a party. It is possible—indeed, certain—that a loose use of language, if persisted in, ultimately leads to woolliness and obscurity; but there are many barbarisms of speech which cause not a shadow of misunderstanding. If they are attacked, this is best done on the ground that the discipline of manners is as necessary in language as in life. This discipline may easily be carried to extremes, but without it there can be no civilisation.

It seems to me that the object of language is not only to make our meaning clear, but to make it clear in the fashion customary in civilised society. Convention in such matters is almost as important as meaning. If one were praising a new novel, one could make one's enthusiasm as manifest in pidgin English as in the chastest prose, but praise in so unconventional a form would be ineffective. I recently found in an Anglo-Russian lesson-book interesting examples of the way in which meaning can be made clear in the oddest and most distorted kind of sentence. Here we are given good Russian sentences, with an English word-for-word translation between the lines, and on the whole the English translation is surprisingly easy to follow. Thus we have two proverbs translated: "Not all gold what glitters. Not spit in the well—may be of use some water to drink." This may not be conventional English, but the meaning is as clear as the water in the well.

The most attractive feature of these lessons is an interlinear word-for-word translation of Tchehov's play, *The Three Sisters;* and here, too, we can follow the meaning with scarcely more difficulty than in the ordinary translations that have been published. There is, perhaps, even something added to the meaning, some acceptable element of strangeness, as a result of the general derangement of the language. Olga seems more Russian than ever when she indulges in recollections of Moscow in sentences like these: "Father received brigade and went out with us out of Moscow eleven years ago, and I distinctly recollect, in beginning of May there, at the season in Moscow already all in bloom, it is warm, all poured over with sun. Eleven years have passed, and I remember there all, as though we had left yesterday. My God! To-day in morning I woke up, saw mass of light, saw spring, and joy agitated itself in my soul, it wanted itself on to birthplace passionately." That is surely prose charged with emotion, and what could be more effective than Baron Tusenbach's description of Battery-Commander Vershinin to Irina. "Interesting man?" asks Trina. "Yes," replies Tusenbach, "nothing to oneself, only a wife, mother-in-law, and two girls. By that wifed in second time. He makes visits and everywhere tells that by him wife and two girls. And so here he will tell. Wife somewhat half-witted, with long girlish plaits, says only high-soaring things, philosophizes and often tempts herself on suicide, evidently in order to salt husband. I should long have left from such, but he suffers and only complains." It must be admitted that, compared with Mrs. Garnett's translation, this version to some extent fails in lucidity. It is difficult, for example, to guess that to "salt" a husband means to annoy him, or that "nothing to oneself" means "so-so." But we are left in no doubt as to the general drift of Tusenbach's description, and the craziness seems still crazier because the English is as crazy as the battery-commander's second wife.

I am inclined to think, indeed, that we have for a long time been following wrong principles in the translations of foreign masterpieces. English translators do their utmost to make the characters in foreign books talk good English, and as a result these characters lose a considerable amount of their highly desirable queerness. Here, for instance, are two translations of a passage in *The Three Sisters*, one in Mrs. Garnett's excellent English, the other in a word-for-word version. Mrs. Garnett makes Irina say:

> Oh dear! to say nothing of human beings, it would be better to be an ox, better to be a humble horse and work, than a young woman who wakes at twelve o'clock, then has coffee in bed, then spends two hours in dressing . . . . Oh, how awful that is!

The word-for-word version of the same outburst runs:

> God mine, better to be an ox, better to be simple horse, only should work, than a young woman, who rises at twelve o'clock of day afterwards drinks in bed coffee, afterwards two hours dresses. . . . Oh, how this is awful!

As regards clearness, there is nothing to choose between the two passages, but I think the Russianness of the young woman who breakfasts in bed after mid-day is expressed more emphatically in the word-for-word prose.

Again, we are aware of a certain Englishness of tone when Mrs. Garnett translates:

> VERSHININ: I knew your mother.
> IRINA: Mother is buried in Moscow.

In the word-for-word version, on the other hand, we enjoy the full Russian flavour of the dialogue:

> VERSHININ: I your little mother knew.
> IRINA: Ma in Moscow buried.

What, again, could be more essentially foreign in flavour than the passage in which the three sisters, Masha, Olga and Irina, discuss their brother Andrew, who is heard playing the violin:

> MASHA: This is Andrew who plays, our brother.
> IRINA: He by us a savant. Must be, will be, a professor.
> MASHA: According to wish of Pa.
> OLGA: We to-day him teased. . . . He, it seems, in love a little.
> IRINA: With one local young lady. To-day she will be by us, according to all probability.
> MASHA: Ah, how she dresses! Some strange, bright skirt and red blouse.

Superficial people have often laughed at the English of the phrase-books prepared for the use of travellers on the Continent. But may it not be that the genius of foreign languages is best captured in English such as no Englishman would dream of speaking? After all, we read the Russians in order to get into the recesses of the Russian mind, and, if they are Anglicised too completely and too smoothly they become little better than second-hand Englishmen. One might almost as well translate Synge, as translate a Russian into classical English. Hence, it seems to me, that future productions of Tchehov on the stage should ignore the good English translations of the plays and boldly make use of the word-for-word versions. Then, at last, we should be stirred to the depths by the characteristic Russian despair, as when Andrew cries:

> Oh, where is it, whither went away my past, when I was young, joyful, clever, when I dreamt and thought refinedly? I own ours exists already two hundred years, in it hundred thousand inhabitants, and not one who would not be resembling to others, not one savant, not one artist. Only they eat, drink, sleep, afterwards they die . . . are born of others and also eat, drink, sleep. Life theirs they diversify with brandy and with cards. And wives deceive husbands, and husbands tell lies, make appearance, that nothing not see, nothing not hear. Vulgar influence oppresses children, and they become such pitiful ones as their parents.

Does not the very helplessness of the English emphasise and make clear the helplessness of the Russian? Critics have complained of the unsatisfactoriness of many of the attempts to produce Tchehov's plays in this country. Let Sir Nigel Playfair produce *The Three Sisters* in real Russo-English, and we shall see the opening of a new era in the translation of foreign works of genius. For even the stage-directions lose something in the course of their transmission into orthodox English. How tame seems Mrs. Garnett's "In the house the 'Maiden's Prayer' is played on the piano," in comparison with the Russo-English version, "In house they play on grand piano 'Prayer of a Virgin'"!

Possibly, then, all the friends of bad English—bad grammar, split infinitives, clichés, and words used in their wrong meanings—are right. A house agent's prose is at least as intelligible as Tchehov translated word-for-word. "As soon as poss." is as clear to the meanest understanding as "In vain, Feodor Ilyitch, you moustache to yourself shaved off." That is, perhaps, how everybody will talk in the world-language of the future. The floodgates have been opened by the anti-grammarians, and they will then have their reward.

Y. Y.

THE WISDOM OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

THE late Dr. Rudolf Steiner, philosopher, mystic, student of occultism and founder of the Anthroposophical Society, took a great interest in agriculture; he believed that modern methods of intensive cultivation contravene the laws of nature, and that in the course of time, though we shall grow an ever-increasing abundance of food, it will fail to nourish us.

There is in England to-day an Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation with headquarters at Bray-on-Thames; it issues notes and correspondence on Anthroposophical agricultural methods through the medium of its journal *Persephone*. There are kindred societies on the Continent, and in the summer of last year the Fourth Anthroposophical Conference was held at Marienstein in Germany. The work appears at first sight to be of more than ordinary interest, because it results from the labours of a man who had his own special angle of vision and was undoubtedly gifted with what is commonly called extension of faculty. Experiments are being carried out to test certain of his teachings. The papers that have been read at various conferences and are submitted to the Society from time to time, strike a note that is at once old and new, old because some of the conclusions reached to-day by the Anthroposophists confirm country beliefs that go back to the dawn of time, while others deal drastically with modern convictions.

At Marienstein last summer, Madame Kolisko gave the results of her own research work in sowing with an eye on the moon's phases. She stated that peas planted two days before the full moon yielded two and half times as much as an equal amount planted before the new moon, the ratios in the case of tomatoes being 36 to 20, in beans 18 to 12, and in cabbage about three and a half to one. This has a curious interest. The Germans, the Finns, the Esthonians and the Celts, sow corn when the moon is waxing, and root crops when it is waning. In Denmark the croaking of frogs announces the time for sowing spring oats, the Finnish peasant sows barley when the buttercups appear and rye when the raspberries ripen.

In Paris a few weeks ago a friend was telling me of the plane trees that are planted along the boulevards. When one dies another, fully grown, is brought at great cost and labour to be planted in its place. Of late it has been discovered that if the new tree is planted in the same position with regard to the points of the compass that it occupied before it was lifted, it will thrive; if this orientation be neglected it will die. So to-day the compass points are marked on trees before they are moved and the people whose job it is to replenish the boulevards complain that their business is falling off. The mortality among the transplanted planes is negligible.

In the days when I first attempted to study the inner life of rural England, and I am talking of thirty-five years ago when I was little more than a boy, I came across some astonishing beliefs in the valley of the Blackwater. Then the country that stretches from Maldon on the hill down to Bradwell or Mersey on the estuary, was as remote as anybody could desire. Parts of it were ten or twelve miles from rail head. There were no visitors on holiday, other than friends of the farmers, there were no large estates, the land belonged chiefly to hospitals and corporations and the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's. There were no hotels, but there were a few clean country inns where a bedroom would cost 2s., breakfast 9d., dinner 1s. 3d., and a substantial tea 1s. Five shillings for the day, or twenty-five shillings for the week, was the price of living there, and it was good living, for the food was grown on the spot. Eggs, in the early spring, would be retailed at ½d. each, a chicken cost 2s. 6d. The agricultural labourer earned about 12s. a week and received his three or four pounds for harvest; his family would appear on the parish registers from the time when the registers were first kept.

Now in these villages, in which I spent some pleasantly leisured years, I found that the principles of growing that are recommended by the Anthroposophical Agriculturists to-day were already understood and followed. So soon as the new moon came men would plant their gardens or allotments, and in due season would kill their pig, but they would not plant flowers or kill their pig under a waning moon. I remember asking why in the case of a pig, and being told, "Do, she'll waste." My informant was very sparing of words, and it was some time before I discovered the belief that a waning moon has all sorts of power for evil, and the growing moon all manner of power for good. Some sages among the countrymen held stoutly that these malignant forces existed and that a rising moon could combat them while a waning moon was unable to put up any resistance. The first "wise woman" I ever knew—she would probably have been burned for a witch in earlier times because she looked just like the popular representation of one—would collect what she called her "yarbs" of healing under a rising moon, and would declare that the virtue went out of them as soon as the moon was "on her back"; it is worth noting that both a waxing and waning moon may have this aspect. But, be this as it may, these beliefs must have

existed through the centuries, and now Anthroposophy declares they are well founded.

There is much sense in the new teaching. For example, we are told that poultry in orchards and meadows, ducks and geese in brooks, ponds, stagnant pools and damp meadows, should be allowed to run free, and that their number should be regulated by the amount of insect food they can obtain. In this connection I remember that one of the most successful poultry keepers I ever knew was an old miller. His water mill stood by the side of a trout stream that ran through a wood, and in summer time he used to rise at 3.30 to release the water and set the great wheel moving. At the same time he used to open his chicken houses, and the birds, in eager pursuit of the early worm, would fill themselves until, as he said, he had no need to give them a morning meal of grain. He boasted one of the largest egg baskets in the district.

In Germany the old husbandmen place a piece of silver, copper or iron in their birch-bark seed basket, a few use copper seed containers, while the peasants of Finland keep a little quicksilver in a feather at the bottom of their container. There is some old-time significance in this, and reference is made to the fact that algae die in water distilled in metal vessels, and water is set free from bacteria by being conducted over fine silver sieves. It would be interesting to find what lies behind the practice of the German and Finnish peasants, a practice of which I have found no counterpart in these islands.

Very significant is the attack by the Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation upon the reckless use of poison washes and certain artificial manures. The Agricultural Adviser of the Foundation, Dr. Carl Mirbt, reports that when he was last in the West of England, butchers were complaining that the offals of the beasts they slaughtered were often declared unfit for human consumption, although the meat was passed, and they thought that artificial manures were in part responsible. One German authority on plant physiology has declared that sprays and washes frequently change the balance of microflora, increasing some groups of organisms and killing others. Another disadvantage of their use is the effect upon the earth worm, the friend of man, that regulates the moisture and air in the soil. Moles, too, need earth worms, and when fertilisers or sprays that are harmful to worms are used, the moles go and the grubs increase. Toads are said to leave orchards where spraying has been carried on. A report from Hanover, quoted by Dr. Mirbt, states that where grass and other plants have been affected by copper sprays used on trees, nearly three hundred sheep and six cows died, and in Switzerland, where the famous Gruyère cheese is made, it is not permitted to feed the dairy cows with any food grown under trees that are treated with poisonous sprays. Farmyard manure, liquid or solid, must not be mixed with sulphuric acid, copperas or superphosphate.

The German ornithologist, Floericke, has shown that wild birds leave districts where poisonous sprays are used on trees, while the effect of the arsenical spray on bees is so well known that English orchardists are warned against using these sprays when trees are breaking into blossom. It is stated that the use of copper sprays to prevent phylloxera in the continental vineyards is dangerous. The ash of vine wood is often found reddened by the copper, and it is said that wine dregs from purest grape juice will show a copper content where the spray has been used extensively. Last year Professor Ziegler, of Freibourg, reported twenty-five cases of poison resulting from spraying for phylloxera. Where mercury sprays have been used on wheat, mercury has been discovered in bread by Professor Stock, of Karlsruhe, and he claims that even traces of metal are sufficient to affect the nervous system, and that many sick people are affected by a diet that has been touched, at some stages of preparation, by highly dangerous chemical substances.

So far as I have followed the work of the Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation, it looks as though it can be of considerable value. The modern tendency is to speed up production at all costs and to go to any extremes to combat the troubles that are associated with over-production. One need not travel the whole road with the Anthroposophists to become increasingly aware that the use of poison in the preparation of food may have very serious effects. After all, arsenic, copper, lead, chlorine, are all poisons in their degree, and yet each has some use in the production of certain food we eat, and the modern tendency is to hold that the end justifies the means. It may be that it fails altogether to justify them and that the rapid increase of many terrible diseases is due to the pace and method of modern production, since we are what we eat, and we must reap as we sow.

The danger is that many people will be disposed to disregard any agricultural principles that are founded upon occult study, but we may take it for granted that every interest that handles food is cheerfully prepared to poison its clients if it can increase its dividends by so doing, and if the poisoning that makes for profit is not against the law. To these high aims the Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation may well call a halt.

S. L. B.

A QUESTION OF CLASS

"THIS deficit," exclaims the Tory,
Over his coffee and liqueur,
"Is abso-bally-lutely gory:
We *must* cut down expenditure.

"I'm all, of course, for social *bonhomie*,
But luxury to-day's absurd;
Let's try a spot of real economy
And tell M.P.s to travel third.

"'Tis just a gesture, but, I'm thinking,
(Have a cigar?), a lead so clear
Should stop the working-class from sinking
Their cash in baccy and in beer.

"And no one need be hurt. I guess you
Won't find those Labour chaps too proud!
They're used to roughing it. Lord bless you!
They *like* to travel with the crowd.

"*We'll* use the good old car in reason,
Or if the worst comes to the worst,
We'll take our third-class pass or season,
Pay the excess—and travel first."

Why rake the controversy's embers?
Well, for his part, MacFlecknoe swears
'Tis not, perhaps, the first-class members
Can best afford the first-class fares.

Yet those who labour through the session
May need, at times, the quiet and ease
Which merchant princes of discretion
Think requisite for their C. T.s.

MACFLECKNOE.

SUBSCRIBERS wishing to notify a CHANGE OF ADDRESS are particularly requested to write early in the week. Notice of any such change received *later than Wednesday in each week cannot be dealt with*. All such communications must be addressed to The Manager, NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

Correspondence

RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your first number is so excitingly good, so many of the articles in it will read as vividly twenty years hence as they do to-day, that I feel it a little ungracious to grumble at some of the doctrine which is woven into what you write about, "Education, the Next Step." But the issues are so crucial that I venture to attempt a statement of the other side.

If I were a young man going into publishing, I should not enlist in a denominational firm. And yet it is good for English thought that some publishing houses represent the traditions of Rome, Canterbury and the Dissenting Deputies. If I had just taken my degree and was meaning to teach or study education, I should take a year at a training college before looking for a post in a primary or post-primary school. But I confess that I should ask Sir Percy Nunn to take me at the London University Day Training College, or Mr. George Smith to enrol me at 15 Norham Gardens, Oxford, both of these institutions being undenominational. And yet who can fully express the debt of English education to the Convent of Notre Dame in Liverpool, to Miss Mercier at Whitelands, to Borough Road and Stockwell, to Westminster which is Wesleyan, or to what Dr. Mayo, after three years with Pestalozzi at Yverdun, did through the Home and Colonial Training College?

I find, however, when I question myself, that I should not choose a denominational school to serve in, but an undenominational one. Perhaps for unworthy reasons, but decisively and honestly nevertheless. Yet English education would have lost the richness of its influence (and, in spite of all our weaknesses, vacillations, hypocrisies, snobberies and muddleheadedness, no education in the world has a richer content than ours), but for the religious tradition of the mediæval schools, a tradition never snapped off in England, and but for the living power which abides in the schools which profess and practice this or that form of the Christian faith. It is this rich variety of living tradition, so costly in grace and courage, this rich variety which keeps in juxtaposition the lifework of Robert Owen, John Wesley, the Clapham Evangelicals, McKeble, John Stuart Mill, the Catholic Orders and John Henry Newman, that I for one hope to see preserved in cordial relation to the modern State and with due measure of decent aid from public funds. National education should be national. And the national spirit of England has diverse spiritual traditions colouring its flame. In view of this I have hopes, faint at times, for we are near the end of an era, that the new English model of tolerance may be followed over a large part of the world rather than the model of Revolutionary France or the present model of the U.S.A. or the model of Soviet Russia. But I hasten to add that I realise the reasons which have led to the present situation in American education, a situation which no foreigner should presume to upbraid, and that in France, in spite of legislative parsimony and *parti pris*, the Catholic schools are an essential factor in national education. The eternal certainties of the Christian faith (as I believe them to be) will not be shaken by any refusal to admit Christian schools to their fair share of public aid. But the schools of the English people will in the long run be hurt by divorce from Christian teaching.

To help one in reaching firm and sure convictions as to what the Shorter Catechism calls The End of Man is the fundamental work of education and of self-education in youth and age. In the doctrinal part of this work (not to speak of its highest sanctions) there are two opposite poles of truth, human and divine. For these poles may stand the names of St. Augustine and J. J. Rousseau. Between these extremes, in English schools as they now are, there is a parti-coloured series of combinations and admixtures. To have it so makes in England, if not for truth, at least for unity and concord. To forbid, in all schools aided by the State, common prayer and worship, the study of the Scriptures and (in schools of specific types) the clear teaching of the propositions which are the bones of belief, would change the spiritual and intellectual content of our education. For twenty years or more the momentum of the past would carry us forward, at a slackening speed, on accustomed lines. But after that, what spiritual and emotional substitute would fill the vacuum—a vacuum which education abhors? J. J. Rousseau, moving, prophetic, human as he is, would not, I fear, suffice as the only staff of life.—Yours, etc.,

Oxford. MICHAEL E. SADLER.
March 1st.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am deeply in sympathy with what you say. The secondary education of *all children* up to at least fifteen years must be paramount with us all. But, you will pardon me for saying so, you are not sufficiently detailed and explicit. In the first place, Mr. Scurr and his supporters, whom I do not agree with, are there as the first obstacle to the Bill's successful passage through the House. In the next place, even apart from their opposition (I agree with you about the Lords), what do you propose to do about the existing non-provided school buildings? Do you propose to buy them out, or to build new ones at immense cost? It is there that the difficulty will come in. For my part, I cannot but feel that by far the wisest policy would have been to pass the late Bill, had the Peers permitted. I am firmly convinced that the necessary religious concordat would then have been forthcoming. And that would have been a small price to pay for universal secondary education up to fifteen years of age. There would have been but small difficulty in our Anglican schools. That was admitted on all sides. In vast single school areas the Nonconformists would have had no trouble at all. The Roman Catholics are a tiny, though noisy, minority. There are no single school areas in their case. The concession to their demands would have made small difference to the country as a whole. Why not make it then? Your way may be the best. But you need to explain more fully how it is to be done. In any case I am afraid we shall have to wait until the General Election after the next one before anything can be done now.—Yours, etc.,

Silkstone Vicarage, WALTER B. GRAHAM.
Barnsley.
February 27th.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your article "Education: the Next Step" you write: "That the school-leaving age ought to be raised, and raised at the earliest opportunity, goes without question."

Are you sure of that?

Might it not have been wiser to say, "It goes without question that a greater fulfilment of the purposes of education should be made possible at the earliest opportunity"?

Lord Hailsham recently hinted in the House of Lords that the raising of the school-leaving age is not the best next step in the field of State education.

I believe all political parties will agree that the primary purpose of State education is to provide as well as possible an equal opportunity for all. This at least is surely one of the more important Socialist tenets.

To-day the child of poor parents needs to be something of a genius and endowed with abnormal perseverance to win a degree. The raising of the school-leaving age will not bring higher education within the reach of those who possess less than abnormal mental endowments. It will in no wise further this important purpose of State education.

Few will deny that the ideal would be to make education compulsory up to seventeen or eighteen and at the same time to provide State universities for those who are suited for higher educational standards. But it is a question, and one I think deserving of deep consideration, whether, pending the realisation of the ideal, it would not be better that the next increase of public expenditure on education be spent on the establishment of a first-rate State university. This university would then provide free education, free board, and perhaps certain allowances to those students of State schools who come up to the necessary mental standards required.

Such a system as this would at once add purpose and value to all primary and secondary education. It would be a start towards the ideal of equal opportunity for all, and when more money becomes available it could be used, at one time to raise the school-leaving age, at another to provide more universities, until finally the two sides blend into a unified whole, and we have a system which provides every child with no less and no more education than he is capable of consuming.—Yours, etc.,

Hollyhocks, Loom Lane, Radlett, Herts. H. B. BUSH.
March 1st.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I see reasons for your view that "public education, paid for out of public funds, ought to be secular education." You would not, I take it, suggest that the public in general disapproves

of religious education, or regards it as a waste of time, but that since we disagree as to what kind of religious education should be given, the best plan is to drop it altogether. It is true that none of the religious education given is entirely approved by all the parents. The undenominational teaching given in council schools is just as unsatisfactory to church parents as is the church teaching to nonconformist parents. Yet in this neighbourhood at any rate most parents seem to prefer Christian teaching of which they do not entirely approve to no religious teaching at all. They also approve of the morning study opening with prayer. In one church and one council school totalling 130 children, only three are withdrawn, by their parents, from the prayers and religious instruction.

You say, " . . . religious vested interests . . . have done . . . harm in the past to the cause of educational progress." This seems to me to be unfair, especially as you quote no instances. Was not the church the pioneer of free education? To-day church people have to pay rates for education like other people, and, in addition, they help the managers of church schools to maintain the buildings, which they have provided, in order that church teaching may be given to church children.

Perhaps you are thinking of denominational managers who have appointed inferior teachers because they approved of their religious convictions. How are you going to avoid such use of authority? Someone has got to appoint the teachers, and that someone is likely to have ideas on religion which may influence his choice. There are cases where managers of council schools have been so influenced.

One can no more really secularise education than one can secularise life, because life is not purely secular. Even if the State barred the Bible and all religion from the public education, the religious convictions, or lack of convictions, of the teachers would still effect for better or worse their influence upon the children.—Yours, etc.,

Hepple, Morpeth. E. GILES.

EPSTEIN

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In reference to Sir Michael Sadler's letter upon the Epstein statue of "Genesis" in your issue of the 21st ult., I cannot think that all the great Greek, Roman and Egyptian sculptors have had a false conception of art. I am inclined to think that Mr. Epstein has mistaken the horror of confinement for the pathos of maternity. I am also curious to know in what manner Sir Michael thinks the statue of "Genesis" foreshadows "huge changes in our present ways of life," unless he thinks it a good advertisement for birth-control. Neither I, nor any other person that I have met, however, will disagree with him that the statue would "look superb in a glade of a hill-forest in Tahiti."—Yours, etc.,

44 Bedford Square, W.C.1. MARGOT OXFORD.

ROUSE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have been surprised to note that not even the ultra-patriotic section of the press, which till recently was never tired of reminding us of "all that we owe our gallant lads," has had the generosity to call proper attention to Rouse's war record. As there has been so much prejudice against him during the case, it seems unfair that so little has been said about facts which tell in his favour. It appears that Rouse joined up in 1914, at the age of about twenty, and while engaged in defending his country was shot through the head. He was invalided home, and it was only after his return to civilian life that he seems to have developed the sexual megalomania over the details of which the shocked English public has recently been gloating. (I have known a good many of the same unhappy generation of ex-Service men who, without being wounded, have become morally irresponsible and queer in the head as a result of their war experiences).

Since truth is said to be stranger than fiction it is, no doubt, within the bounds of possibility that the astonishing cock-and-bull story put up by the prosecution (but unsupported as far as I have been able to discover by any conclusive evidence) may represent what actually took place. We are bound to assume that Rouse—although his lies and follies are not psychologically inconsistent with innocence of the offence charged against him—really did commit the motiveless, crack-brained, unpremeditated murder for which he has been condemned. Granting that he did it, is it possible to believe that he was in complete command of his senses? If he was "not quite right" at the time, what was the cause of his aberration? Surely it is by no means improbable that the fact that he had the misfortune to stop a German bullet may have had a good deal to do with it?

I am writing this letter before the result of the petition for Rouse's reprieve has been announced. In company with everyone, without a single exception, with whom I have discussed the case, I hope sincerely that the reprieve will be granted.—Yours, etc.

London, W.C.1. DOUGLAS GOLDRING.

THE COTTON FAMINE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The Public Works Act of 1863 to which Mr. Hammond has drawn attention in your last number was certainly a success if the improvement which it brought about in the sanitary conditions of Lancashire towns be considered. But as a means of providing work for unemployed cotton operatives it was a failure. When the scheme was still under consideration Rawlinson wrote that he thought that "a large proportion of the able-bodied distressed operatives" could be employed, and Farnall (Government Commissioner in Lancashire) thought that 27,000 men could be found work for a year. Actually in March, 1863, only 4,838 men were directly engaged upon public works and only 3,435 of these had been cotton operatives. No wonder MacCullagh Torrens wrote that "a more lamentable confession of shortcoming under the circumstances cannot be conceived than these few but striking figures furnish." To bring his total up to 7,838 men Rawlinson *estimated* that 3,000 men were being employed "in obtaining and conveying materials furnished by contractors." By 1864 Manchester had borrowed £85,000 under the Public Works Act, but was employing only thirty-five operatives. Rawlinson believed that the smallness of the number of cotton operatives employed on public works was due mainly to "the admirable and perfect system of relief administered so liberally yet so wisely by the Central Relief Committee." Admirable and perfect it may have been, but its liberality may be judged from the fact that "the scale of relief which has obtained the approval of the Central Executive Committee is one which provides, on the average, two shillings per head for the whole mass of the recipients, to which may be added, in winter, a supply of fuel and clothing if the family have been long out of work." (Manual for the Guidance of Local Relief Committees in the Cotton Districts.)—Yours, etc.,

31 Rylett Road, London, W. 12. W. O. HENDERSON.

THE DESTINY OF THE UNIVERSE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. E. D. Cecil starts off his letter on the above subject with assertions regarding "guesses" of Sir James Jeans, but makes, before he closes, reference to a well-known guess—that of Bickerton's Nova, or new star, theory—as if it provided an alternative to the "heat-death" hypothesis favoured by Jeans.

Without attempting to deal with the hypotheses of Millikan, Lodge and others, which envisage the probable birth of "matter" from "radiation"—the real alternative to Jeans' hypothesis—it may be remarked that:

1. Bickerton's hypothesis has been by no means ignored by astronomers. It is given in most text books, along with other hypotheses of the origin of Novae. The chief objection to it is that the observed frequency of appearance of new stars seems to be much too great, judging by the probable number of collisions calculated from the average velocities and distances apart of the stars in space, even allowing for a *possible* existence of many dark bodies.

2. Even if it is true, it forms no alternative to the heat-death idea. If there is no cyclic process whereby radiative energy again becomes "matter," collisions between stars cannot postpone *ad infinitum* the dissipation into radiation known as "heat-death," and do not provide "a cycle of perpetual renewal" at all. They would, in fact, promote the process, by degrading energy of motion into the energy of radiation of the high-temperature body or bodies produced.

Mr. Cecil asserts that there are "dead stars." There is no observational evidence of the existence of such bodies; and surmise to that effect is as much a guess as anything in Jeans' books. The late Professor Bickerton advocated his hypothesis in and out of season. Astronomers did not get a chance to ignore it!—Yours, etc.,

London. PETER DOIG.

THE NAZIS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—As a German I wish to enter a protest against your article "Cultural Fascism" in THE NEW STATESMAN of January 17th.

It is rather to be doubted if the writer of this article is of German nationality, and we doubt still more if he is a citizen in the Nazi sense. What we wish particularly to protest against is the representation of Lion Feuchtwanger as an exponent of the true German literature of to-day. Indeed we think we are much nearer the truth when we call his "Success" a *roman de tendence* and his writings in general, and *Success* in particular, the political shafts of one who is not at home in German soil. We also doubt Herr Koesterich's assertion that he is in a position to give a more unprejudiced judgment than Germans. That Germans do not accept the book as representing German contemporary literature is proved by the fact that—as Herr Koesterich himself must confess—the book is little read in Germany.

The writer of your article is obviously unsympathetic to the National Socialist movement. He dismisses what he so inappropriately calls "Cultural Fascism" in a column or two, forgetting that any intelligent person would refuse to accept his views without the necessary thorough analysis. A refutation of Germany's outlook cannot be contained in a couple of words, and those words written by one who neither cared nor tried to get at the heart of the problem.

Herr Koesterich's supposition that "all progressive tendencies in European intellectual life"—as he sees them—"will be endangered" is well founded. Books and novels like Feuchtwanger's *Success* and the Manns' book *Die grosse Sache* will certainly be abandoned by the Germany of to-morrow. But healthy Liberalism is not in the slightest danger. On the contrary, the world will one day be thankful to the Germany that put an end to the literature which is not only a challenge to the self-respect of every individual, but a threat to coming generations. There will, of course, be in Germany the "Iron Discipline and Absolute Obedience" of Arnold Bronnen's novel *Rossbach*, which Herr Koesterich finds so disagreeable, but which are so necessary for the re-erection of the German nation. There will be no room for such writers as Feuchtwanger and his literary clique; such "Dichter und Denker" will have to go abroad to find a gullible public in other countries. Later will come other and truer representatives of German thought in poets of the people such as Herrmann Stehr and philosophers like Leopold Ziegler. Then once again Germany will take her true place in the intellectual life of Europe.—Yours, etc.,

Oxford. A GERMAN OF TO-MORROW.
February, 1931.

BIRD LOVERS AND BIRD FANCIERS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Will you grant me a small space in your paper? Last week I was visiting the "Grand National Cage Bird Show" at the Crystal Palace. As the swing doors of the hall closed behind me I heard the twittering of many birds. No joy in that sound, and still less in the sight of those hundreds of small cages, each with its fluttering occupant. I had passed on my long upward journey from the station to the hall numerous bright and pleasant posters, showing parrots and smaller birds amongst gay tropical foliage and flowers, to advertise the Cage Bird Show. Though surely flowers and leaves are the right setting for birds, they are hardly the right setting for advertising a show of this kind, neither can I believe that "cage birds" is the right term for any bird—caged indeed they are, but no bird was MADE for a cage. It's a trapped thing with wings that we see in a cage, it *should* be a wingless, painted musical-box! The poster also told me that there were prizes offered to the extent of £1,000, so there we have the reason for the show!

I bought my catalogue; on turning the pages we find what "cage birds" are. They are, only to mention a few, thrushes, blackbirds, nightingales, magpies—birds of leafy glade and tree-top. They are goldfinches and greenfinches, bullfinches, linnets, chaffinches and many others who weed our fields and make pleasant our gardens. Beautiful tits who haunt the pine-woods now try to make the best of five inches of twisted fir in a tiny space no bigger than my two hands. There are woodpeckers, shyest of all birds, not daring to move from the little pieces of bark provided for them—starlings who, when free, live in great happy companies, crouching alone in wooden cells.

We will pass from our own birds to the "Foreign Section." They are weavers and whydahs, finches and combasous, birds of the sun. They are tanagers, palm birds, sugar birds, sunbirds, insect- and spider-catching birds—so many of these lovely things! A very sad humming bird I saw, with two perches instead of flowing trees, a small jar instead of flower nectar—this flashing jewel of the sun a prisoner in English winter! And seventeen lovely Japanese robins, very charming and interesting birds, who pine and die when they lose their mates. They are netted for the English market in Japan—it is estimated that out of 100 caught only one arrives in England, so these 17 birds represent 1,683 *dead* birds!

I leave the exhibition and take sad pictures with me, not the least of which is the memory of a magpie, trying in a small, cramped space to eat a mealworm without at the same time damaging his tail.—Yours, etc.,

6 Observatory Gardens, T. FISHER-SMITH.
London, W. 8.

MR. COLE AND MRS. WOOLF

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—To be cursed by Virginia Woolf is better than to be blessed by anybody else, for her very cursing is an enchantment. She cannot do with Mr. Cole in Paris, she is as exasperated as Mr. Walpole with this Goodman Frog who will not come and dine, but sits in his nightcap by a good fireside "enjoying myself as if I had been at home," she slaughters him with what he himself would call "a bouncing message"; and behold he gets up and walks off the page, embarrassed only by the colour of his new Pompadour greatcoat, and the Paris wig made so miserably that he will have to send it to his London barber. And when she comes to Blecheley Parsonage in the spring, as in spite of herself she has promised to do, to look at his Crocuses and Mazereons, and Hypatecas, he will give her some Pots of Auriculas and Precox Tulips just going to blow, to put in her Chamber, and she will praise his Terreen for Soupe, of yellow ware new come from Mr. Wedgwood and will advise him about the new siding of his Hot Bed, and his small Nursery of Sycamores that seeded themselves last Year in the Strawberry Garden, and he will not even mention the Dissertation he is writing on the Ely Tablet, for it is not to be looked for that ladies should concern themselves with the Study of Antiquities.

Yet, at the moment, Mrs. Woolf is hard on Mr. Cole. She will not forgive him for not unlocking Walpole's heart, though the key to that is as hard to come by as the one that the Turkish ladies thought must lock Lady Mary Wortley Montagu into her stays: and, indeed, the nearest these two come to speech of Madame du Deffand is when Walpole writes of his anxiety for the tiny dog that was her pitiful legacy to him, and Mr. Cole replies with his own heartache for Busy, who will not go off his knee. The truth is that Mrs. Woolf has looked in Mr. Cole for Mr. Walpole, and not for what Mr. Walpole loved, Cole in himself Cole, as shy and obstinate and hospitable as Mr. Badger. Heretic as she is, she will soon be as orthodox a believer as myself. It was a chance reference in the *Monthly Magazine* for August, 1903, that the Cole MSS. at the British Museum after long concealment "are now open for the inspection of the curious," that sent me to the MS. Room to read in the curious flat-headed script, so right for Goodman Frog, how he had had Words with Molly about the Cat's Eating of his Dinner: and since then I have followed him through folio after folio, listening like a three years' child. Perhaps some of the neater monuments might have been omitted; yet Mr. Stokes, who was good enough to undertake the editing ended by being as infatuated as myself, and we decided that what pleased Mr. Cole pleased us also, and that if we could spare a tombstone here and there, we could not spare the language in which Mr. Cole described them, Henry II and Catherine de Medicis, for instance, "naked and dying in white marble so artfully expressed as to shock one to look at them," and the Mixed Style in architecture unjustly complained of by the Bishop of Carlisle, "who with a most compleat Roman Nose, had the most gothic Face of any in the kingdom."

But enough. Mrs. Woolf has promised to come to Blecheley; she will sit in the temple that Mr. Cole had built in the garden, and he will read her the last letter from Paris in which Mr. Walpole longs for spring and lilactide at Strawberry, and, if she presses him, a copy of his own reply.—Yours, etc.,

8 Ormonde Terrace, N.W. 8. HELEN WADDELL.

MISS BENSON AND THE BOOK SOCIETY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Though it was with entirely flattering intention that Mr. Richard Sunne made use of me as a missile I felt a good deal of dismay at finding myself among the broken glass in my friend Mr. Walpole's greenhouse. In order to dissociate myself from this outrage I might break a few panes in Mr. Richard Sunne's, letting in a cold blast on that cherished gloxinia of his, Mr. Stephen Hudson; for instance; but I refrain. The fact that the Book Society, under the chairmanship of Mr. Walpole, has made Miss Stella Benson its choice for this month should, it seems to me, have given Mr. Richard Sunne, as a fellow admirer, unmixed satisfaction. For here at last, after years of neglect on the part of the Hawthornden Committee and, with more excuse, on the part of the French branch of the Vie Heureuse Committee, Miss Stella Benson's individual genius has been given some of the recognition that it deserves in the form of a wide publicity.—Yours, etc.,

SYLVIA LYND.

Miscellany

DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS

WE are in front of a one-storied four-roomed New England farmhouse. It is built of grey wood, and the shutters are painted green. The land is sour and stony. Only the fanatical perseverance of old Ephraim Cabot, now in his seventy-fifth year, could have wrung a living out of it. Man makes God in his own image, otherwise he would feel God-forsaken; Ephraim's God is "hard and lonesome." He once had a chance of cultivating easy land, but his god dwells in stones, and he could not leave him. Ephraim has the virtues and vices of the worshipper of a god of stone: strength, hardiness, and a grasping egotism, now despicable, now impressive. He has a greedy worship for the work of his own hands; like all who have created something through years of pain and effort, the sense of ownership is to him a sacred feeling. Though he had married twice, his farm was always nearer to him than his wives. By his first marriage he begat two sons, Simeon and Peter, who have lived their childhood as farm-labourers. When she died (she was all "good" woman, but she never understood the farmstead was made to be slaved and sweated), he took another wife. She was "pale," and the son she bore was only "pale." (This points Eben, as the hero of the love-struggle which is the substance of the play.) Then she, too, died—leaving a little son. Ephraim left for some years if anything a little less lonely than made that waiting, whining woman was about the house. Peter grew up oppressed and despised by his father and his brother, who were out to crush the life out of a slave more fit for their life. When the mother was there to intervene a little of the tenderness necessary to the human soul blew about the house. Peter grew up oppressed and despised by his father and his brother, who were out to crush the life out of a slave more fit for their life. When the mother was there to intervene a little of the tenderness necessary to the human soul blew about the house. When she died his temperament was twisted (that, incidentally, revolt, hatred of his father, partaken of the unexplored tendency to weak lasciviousness and the bitterness pre-imposed by the notion, right or wrong, that through the mother he had a legal claim to the farm.

When the curtain goes up on the 24 year old Peter several months [illegible] day dreaming and quite fitted for the blood, and he and [illegible] in their father in spite of a thick rule. [illegible] unfortunate young Abbie with the taste of [illegible] and now they are [illegible] together. Abbie [illegible] Ephraim [illegible] hard and lonesome." [illegible] and Eben [illegible] Ephraim [illegible] And the rest [illegible] heart starved creatures together. [illegible] playgoers know, how they [illegible] the inevitable, the subtle, [illegible] them year in year out upon the stage. Passion between these two, and the passion of old Ephraim for his Stone God, raise the play far above the usual adultery play. Fear and poetry, on which tragedy flourishes, blow through it; and needless to say the Court Censor has banned *Desire Under the Elms*. It is not his business to judge of "the morals" of any play sent in for license, but to exercise his power of guessing what may "shock" somebody in it. For this dim occupation he has to cultivate a certain timidity, even a vulgar timidity. He must ask himself, not what the emotional or intellectual value of a play or scene may be, but whether there is anything there which might possibly shock—whom? Ah, that's the question! Whom? He knows that many readers are apt to drop any book with vitality in it, with the exclamation, "Ugh! horrid thing, it's alive"; he knows that certain words wound the ears of Aunt Jane. Though he is forced to pass what must often hurt the word-shy and to sanction imitations of lust upon the stage, because the commercial existence of the theatre is at stake, he clings in his bewilderment to those two dim notions: that blunt (not naughty!) words, even when appropriate to character, should be suppressed, and that a touch of genuine seriousness is apt to make passion "improper," though the gestures of sensuality can go to any length. Such is the sieve through which drama is strained in England. So we have to huddle in societies to see good plays which are not written by Englishmen. For the Gate Theatre much thanks.

The moment Abbie sees her step-son, she divines that he too is heart-starved and sex-starved. But he sees in her only a lustful woman, one who is the detestable supplanter of his mother and the thief of his inheritance. (He had paid off his half-brothers and they have left for California.) He repulses her; and in rage and mortification she tells old Ephraim that Eben made love to her. And since the old man is inclined to leave the farm to Eben and not to her, in spite of his contempt for him, because Eben is after all *his* flesh and blood, she promises to bear him a new son. They pray together—and she makes another attempt upon Eben. This time she is successful. But only by making Eben first believe that through her he will taste again a little joy and rest of heart. The broken dialogue between them late at night in the parlour of the farm, she in her coarse, long, neck-to-heel nightgown, he torn with distrust and longing, is most moving. But it is not this scene alone which drives home the strength of the longing and the depth of the loneliness which unite them. There is a snatch of talk next morning at the window before he goes to work—it is only an exchange of a few remarks—but in it the dramatist has managed to suggest the release, the zest, the unselfish gaiety of passion satisfied. Months pass and Eben's son is born. The old man is wild with joy. It is a proof of his vigour, a guarantee that *he* will still possess, in a sense, after death the work of his hands. At the christening party, the tired mother sits watching the dancing neighbours, among whom her old husband is flinging himself about in an ecstasy of demonstrative youth. All the neighbours guess the truth; she has to support as best she can their innuendos, while upstairs Eben sits beside the cradle.

Now, perhaps, is the point at which to comment on the technical originality of the play. The house before us is divided, as I said, into four rooms in which different scenes take place; the front of the stage represents the farmyard. Sometimes one room, sometimes another is visible; sometimes two together. For instance, during this [illegible] while we watch and [illegible] the revel, we also see [illegible] into the cot and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Prefaces to Shakespeare's plays has expounded so admirably, showing how Shakespeare used them to obtain contrasts and ironic emphasis.

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DESMOND MACCARTHY.

THE MUSIC OF AUTOMATA AND ADOLESCENTS

MEDIOCRE music is a necessity. The world needs mediocre artists of all sorts, but the word "mediocre" should not be a term of reproach; it should signify something midway between the upper and the lower regions, like the Mediterranean Sea. Music that is less than mediocre has to be very bad before it becomes wholly entertaining. That is why Dame Ethel Smyth and her philosopher, H. B. Brewster, in that choral work *The Prison* did not quite succeed. Both have made brave attempts at mediocrity, but both have failed without attaining that bottomness which is completely diverting. When Brewster declares that he is the "song, the bird, the pride, the soul, the home," Ethel Smyth heroically supports him with bird-calls and bugle-calls, contrapuntal exercises and Greek melodies in a vain effort to achieve musically the comprehensiveness of his philosophy, but if she had been a little more reckless and introduced a few vocally gifted denizens of the animal world I, for one, should have enjoyed my evening at the Bach Choir more.

At the last B.B.C. symphony concert at the Queen's Hall Mr. Adrian Boult conducted one of his admirably constructed programmes, consisting of Berlioz's overture *Les Francs Juges*, Elgar's Violin Concerto, a new work by Mossolov entitled *Factory—The Music of Machines*, and the "Eroica" Symphony. Berlioz's overture was composed in 1827-28 when he was about twenty-five years old. Why it is so neglected is a mystery, for it is a delightful work, full of verve and invention, with Berlioz's own musical character stamped upon it. Perhaps it is this subtle individual flavour that is not appreciated, and it is to be remembered, also, that Berlioz's music is exceedingly difficult to conduct because it requires a very nice musical judgment, and a sympathetic understanding of his genius to do it justice. The coarser texture of Wagner's overtures makes them almost fool-proof in performance, whereas Berlioz's greater delicacy and transparency can easily be destroyed by vulgarisation, or made empty by insensitiveness.

The performances of this overture and of the "Eroica" symphony on this occasion made a notable sign-post in the career of Mr. Boult as a conductor. The performance of the "Eroica" was the best I have ever heard of a Beethoven symphony under an English conductor. There were no reservations to be made, for here was a performance, both by orchestra and conductor, well up to the best Continental standards. Mr. Boult is a strange figure; under a catholicity of taste which might have hidden a complete lack of real judgment there is apparently a very solid and definite musical character, for performances such as these of Berlioz and Beethoven cannot come by accident or by inspiration during the concert. They are the result of clear understanding, of careful rehearsal, and of the technical ability to realise in performance one's intellectual conceptions. The B.B.C.'s expensive and carefully selected orchestra can play very erratically; its standards of playing go up and down according to the exactingness and ability of the musician who conducts it, and when I say that it plays better under Mr. Boult than under any of its other conductors the credit must be given wholly to him. The only criticism I have to make of Mr. Boult's performance was that occasionally in the last movement of the "Eroica" spontaneity and vitality were lost through too great deliberation and carefulness. This is, in the circumstances, however, an error on the right side, for Mr. Boult is up against the traditional slackness and slap-dashness of English musicians, and in training his orchestra to more exacting standards and in preparing a thorough musical

MISS BENSON AND THE BOOK SOCIETY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Though it was with entirely flattering intention that Mr. Richard Sunne made use of me as a missile I felt a good deal of dismay at finding myself among the broken glass in my friend Mr. Walpole's greenhouse. In order to dissociate myself from this outrage I might break a few panes in Mr. Richard Sunne's, letting in a cold blast on that cherished gloxinia of his, Mr. Stephen Hudson, for instance; but I refrain. The fact that the Book Society, under the chairmanship of Mr. Walpole, has made Miss Stella Benson its choice for this month should, it seems to me, have given Mr. Richard Sunne, as a fellow admirer, unmixed satisfaction. For here at last, after years of neglect on the part of the Hawthornden Committee and, with more excuse, on the part of the French branch of the Vie Heureuse Committee, Miss Stella Benson's individual genius has been given some of the recognition that it deserves in the form of a wide publicity.—Yours, etc.,

SYLVIA LYND.

Miscellany

DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS

WE are in front of a one-storied four-roomed New England farmhouse. It is built of grey wood, and the shutters are painted green. The land is sour and stony. Only the fanatical perseverance of old Ephraim Cabot, now in his seventy-fifth year, could have wrung a living out of it. Man makes God in his own image, otherwise he would feel God-forsaken; Ephraim's God is "hard and lonesome." He once had a chance of cultivating easy land, but *his* god dwells in stones, and he could not leave him. Ephraim has the virtues and vices of the worshipper of a god of stone: strength, harshness, and a grasping egotism, now despicable, now impressive. He has a greedy worship for the work of his own hands; like all who have created something through years of pain and effort, the sense of ownership is in him a sacred feeling. Though he had married twice, his farm was always nearer to him than his wives. By his first marriage he begat two sons, Simeon and Peter, who have lived from childhood as farm-labourers. When she died (she was a "good" woman, but she never understood the fanaticism with which he slaved and sweated), he took another wife. She was "soft," and the son she bore was also "soft." (This youth, Eben, is the hero of the love-tragedy which is the substance of the play.) Then she, too, died—starved of love—and Ephraim felt for some years if anything a little less lonely than while that waning, whining woman was about the house. Eben grew up oppressed and despised by his father and his brothers, who were not so tough as the old man but of a fibre more fit for their life. While his mother was alive he had enjoyed a little of the tenderness necessary to his nature; and when she died his temperament was warped. Grief, bitterness, revolt, hatred of his father, nourished in him an hysterical tendency to weak violence; and his bitterness was increased by the notion, right or wrong, that through his mother he had a legal claim to the farm.

When the curtain goes up the old man has been absent some months. For one day Spring had again stirred his blood, and he had driven off in his best clothes in search of a third wife. He has bought an unfortunate young widow with the bribe of a roof, and now they are about to return together. Abbie has still a hunger for happiness in her; she is hard only in resolve to wrench some joy yet "thorough the bars of life." It is, of course, between Abbie Putnam and Eben that "desire" is kindled "under the elms." And the rare merit of this play is that we never for an instant doubt the strength of the longing which draws these heart-starved creatures together. "Rare" is the word, as playgoers know, when they recall the imaginatively unedible, synthetic substitutes for passion which are offered them year in year out upon the stage. Passion between these two, and the passion of old Ephraim for his Stone God, raise the play far above the usual adultery play. Fear and poetry, on which tragedy flourishes, blow through it; and needless to say the Court Censor has banned *Desire Under the Elms*. It is not his business to judge of "the morals" of any play sent in for license, but to exercise his power of guessing what may "shock" somebody in it. For this dim occupation he has to cultivate a certain timidity, even a vulgar timidity. He must ask himself, not what the emotional or intellectual value of a play or scene may be, but whether there is anything there which might possibly shock—whom? Ah, that's the question! Whom? He knows that many readers are apt to drop any book with vitality in it, with the exclamation, "Ugh! horrid thing, it's alive"; he knows that certain words wound the ears of Aunt Jane. Though he is forced to pass what must often hurt the word-shy and to sanction imitations of lust upon the stage, because the commercial existence of the theatre is at stake, he clings in his bewilderment to those two dim notions: that blunt (not naughty!) words, even when appropriate to character, should be suppressed, and that a touch of genuine seriousness is apt to make passion "improper," though the gestures of sensuality can go to any length. Such is the sieve through which drama is strained in England. So we have to huddle in societies to see good plays which are not written by Englishmen. For the Gate Theatre much thanks.

The moment Abbie sees her step-son, she divines that he too is heart-starved and sex-starved. But he sees in her only a lustful woman, one who is the detestable supplanter of his mother and the thief of his inheritance. (He had paid off his half-brothers and they have left for California.) He repulses her; and in rage and mortification she tells old Ephraim that Eben made love to her. And since the old man is inclined to leave the farm to Eben and not to her, in spite of his contempt for him, because Eben is after all *his* flesh and blood, she promises to bear him a new son. They pray together—and she makes another attempt upon Eben. This time she is successful. But only by making Eben first believe that through her he will taste again a little joy and rest of heart. The broken dialogue between them late at night in the parlour of the farm, she in her coarse, long, neck-to-heel nightgown, he torn with distrust and longing, is most moving. But it is not this scene alone which drives home the strength of the longing and the depth of the loneliness which unite them. There is a snatch of talk next morning at the window before he goes to work—it is only an exchange of a few remarks—but in it the dramatist has managed to suggest the release, the rest, the unselfish gaiety of passion satisfied. Months pass and Eben's son is born. The old man is wild with joy. It is a proof of his vigour, a guarantee that *he* will still possess, in a sense, after death the work of his hands. At the christening party, the tired mother sits watching the dancing neighbours, among whom her old husband is flinging himself about in an ecstasy of demonstrative youth. All the neighbours guess the truth; she has to support as best she can their innuendos, while upstairs Eben sits beside the cradle.

Here, perhaps, is the point at which to comment on the technical originality of the play. The house before us is divided, as I said, into four rooms in which different scenes take place; the front of the stage represents the farmyard. Sometimes one room, sometimes another is visible; sometimes two together. For instance, during this act, while we watch and overhear the revel, we also see Eben gazing into the cot upstairs. In the preceding act we have watched him twisting on his bed, while old Ephraim, sitting on his wife's next door, expounds to her unheeding ears the Stone-God religion which has isolated and supported him all his years. The device has all the advantages of the Elizabethan stage with its upper scene, which Mr. Granville Barker, in his

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performance he cannot at this stage wholly avoid this danger.

After the music of old-fashioned human beings like Berlioz and Beethoven, it was peculiarly interesting to hear the *Music of Machines* by Mr. Mussolov. Born in Kiev in 1900, Mussolov can be considered as a product of the new Russia, seeing that he was only seventeen years old when the Russian Revolution took place. In their day Berlioz and Beethoven were considered revolutionaries, but artistic revolutionaries. Whatever Mussolov may be politically, artistically he is not a revolutionary in the sense that he turns towards something different from what exists around him. He is a mere imitator, and his imitation in music of the universal whirr of machinery in which Russian, European and American citizens find themselves to-day is a mere musical photograph completely lacking in any psychological expression or judgment. Any revelation of the mind from a contemporary Russian composer would have great interest, but in this work Mussolov shows no more mind than a photographic plate which records a scene impinged upon it. Musicians of Mussolov's calibre in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries imitated battle pieces in music. There are innumerable examples that attained great celebrity and popularity in their day and are now forgotten. There are living composers who are not in the modern fashion, and go on imitating what their predecessors did, but the musician who describes factories in music is no more advanced or modern than the musician who describes battle-pieces. A pre-gun battle-piece would contain only the noises of bows and arrows, the clanging of swords and (if the composer lived during the Pyrrhic wars) the snorting of elephants. Are we to consider such a battle-piece less " modern " or " advanced " than one containing imitations of cannon?

It is with relief that one turns from all such nonsense to the music of Stravinsky, whose new " Capriccio " for pianoforte and orchestra was played at the Courtauld-Sargent concert last Monday. Here we have at least a human being, and not a mere automaton reproducing automatically his environment. But when we examine the quality of this music of Stravinsky's we are brought up against an interesting problem. In the same programme with the new " Capriccio " played by Stravinsky himself was an old work, " L'Oiseau de Feu," conducted by himself. The " Capriccio " is a much more successful work, in my opinion, than his pianoforte concerto and his orchestral pieces played recently at the Stravinsky B.B.C. concert. It is gay, unpretentious, shows musical invention, and is expressive. But so is " L'Oiseau de Feu." In fact, it has more invention, and is more expressive and has more vitality, although its character is of the romantic-adolescent type.

Nevertheless, this adolescent romanticism is fresh and spontaneous and thoroughly enjoyable. In the " Capriccio " we see a mind that has matured to the extent that it is too sophisticated now to be romantically adolescent, but none the less it has never grown and developed inwardly; it has only become more outwardly aware of other opinions and other people's sensations. Stravinsky does not dare and cannot continue to compose in his earlier Fenimore Cooper and Edgar Allan Poe vein of romanticism, a romanticism that was as thoroughly Russian in its folk character as the authors I have mentioned were American and European. No artist above the age of forty who pretends to be a leader can remain a sort of glorified boy-scout or a musical Edgar Wallace. Stravinsky is a man of far too great sophistication for such a role, even if he were not as an artist too ambitious to be content with it.

We therefore see in his later work an increasing effort to rid himself of all this adolescent mystery-mongering and atmosphere. He prunes and inhibits himself to such a degree that the contortions he makes in order to escape from his nature are indeed extraordinary. Every now and then the emotionalism of one of the most emotional (in the nervously physical sense) of composers breaks out in his work; at other times it is repressed so ruthlessly that the result is dry and empty. Sometimes, as in this " Capriccio," a rather barren gaiety and liveliness are allowed to escape, a sort of pathetic ghost of boyishness. For what, after all, is the secret of this phenomenon? Is it not that we have here a case (so common among the most gifted artists nowadays) of prolonged and almost antiquated adolescence? The mind has become sophisticated, the senses have become experienced and aged, and lost their zest and freshness, but the spirit, the character, the human being has not matured and developed correspondingly. Stravinsky one must respect because one is conscious of a struggle. Here is an artist who does not willingly become either an automaton or an aged adolescent. He fights against his nature, he is perhaps indifferent whether his music suffers or not, he is so concentrated upon his struggle. In all this he is representative of his age, and he presents a real problem for critical intelligences.

W. J. TURNER.

ROYAL WILLIAM

A STATESMAN remarked of him that he was " a good egg, but a little cracked." It is not a century since his death; he was always popular; he was both scandalous and eccentric; he was kindly; he was a Sailor King—and yet to-day, when the unvarnished biography is popular, his name adorns the spine of no demy octavo. Such is the strange oblivion of King William IV., known to his contemporaries, in his later years, by the grandiloquent title of the Reform Monarch of England.

Perhaps there are vanquished historians now breathing who have put away their material with a sigh, and essayed a new subject, though there are few characters in English history—Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, is among them—more in need of a fresh and lively re-examination. In every way a figure of fun, William is still, like a discarded jack-in-the-box, crammed away unused in a corner of the toy-cupboard.

Actually, there are two considerable difficulties in the way of the biographic conjurer, the subject himself, and past biography; for King William IV., despite his potentialities, remains a paradox. Apparently rich in comedy, his authentic remarks have lost their pith. Set down in cold print, they are for the most part as stupid as those of a popular comedian which, though from the stage they may convulse an audience, are but sorry stuff in the study. The best tale is perhaps that of a visit to a city in Scotland, where he took a dislike to an official dignitary. Turning to this man's deputy, William said: " When He goes I'll make you Him." To which the dignitary replied: " I should not think of going before your Majesty." Such is one of the better stories; even so, it is not William who amuses.

The bare bones of fact are surely good. Being the third son, William's prospects of the throne were remote, and he was sent when a boy into the navy, where he actually fought under Rodney and served under Nelson, whom he always warmly befriended. His active naval career ended as a result of deliberate disobedience of orders, for he sailed his ship merrily across the Atlantic in a dangerous season because he did not wish to winter on the far side. Later in life his brother the Regent made him Lord High Admiral, a position he filled with the highest possible irregularity. He lived many years in Bushey Park with Mrs. Jordan, a charming actress, by whom he had a numerous progeny. He left her, when it appeared that he must succeed to the throne, to marry a German princess. When he did succeed, he was faced with a political dilemma of enormous magnitude, the Reform Bill agitation. That the throne survived

this was no fault of his own sagacity. The crisis once over, the rest of his life was uneventful, but full of petty ludicrousness, of which his amazing public speech against the Duchess of Kent in her own presence is not the least. But he retained some judgment to the last. As he had befriended Nelson, so did he support Victoria in her difficult minority. He did this practically, with the offer of a large allowance.

His biographers are shocking. A little *Impartial Life* by an unknown shorthand writer called Harding is the best, but even this, written as it was within sound of William's funeral bell, has no perspective. The lives of Huish, Watkins and Wright are also contemporary, and unimaginably scandalous. *The Whispering Gallery* pales beside the indiscretions and fabrications of Huish. The Victorian life of Fitzgerald is quite as poor, and for true and lively pictures any historian must resort to the subsidiary comments of the ubiquitous Greville, to the Duke of Buckingham and to more modern writers who have brushed the subject.

William awaits resurrection. He needs a genius who will display him as someone at once a little greater and a little more comic than he now appears. The genius will lie in a delicate arrangement of truth. For better or for worse, we will no longer tolerate our history dull. And at worst, William himself was never that, though he might well have been, for his thoughtful brother left him 48,000 documents to sign when he ascended one Throne.

OLIVER WARNER.

THERE IS A DIGNITY IN DEATH

THERE is a dignity in Death
That stamps all things that he's removed
As part of the ulterior Love
This fitful flame of ours above.
Strict the fell Sergeant, but his hour
Love in his mercy softeneth.

So let my body in dark care
Rest with some creature's I have loved. . . .
A dog, whose lovely end
In life was just to be a friend;
And with me bury some dead flower
Whose seed's untethered in the air.

GEOFFREY DEARMER.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Mr. Chaplin

CITY LIGHTS provides an entertainment of such an entirely different category from what is usually offered in the world's cinema halls that it is difficult to know where to begin criticising it. Mr. Chaplin can neither be praised nor blamed in comparison with anyone else. He is the only great artist the film has produced; his taste is as discreet as it is spontaneous, his morality is as sublime as it is simple. He is at once the most tragic and the most comic figure of the day. There is nothing he cannot do, no emotion he cannot suggest; so there is no limit to his sympathetic understanding of life. Hence it is almost impossible to say anything about him. The only criticism one can apply to his pictures is that they are apt to be episodic in treatment and lacking in unity. Such a criticism could not be levelled against *The Gold Rush* or *The Kid*; but it can be levelled against *City Lights*. The extremely funny episode of Charlie's boxing match lacks rhyme or reason. It seemed merely inserted to fill up the time; more serious, the whole *motif* of the eccentric millionaire is limply handled. He is just taken in and out of a drawer to help on the plot when it is getting stuck; he is a rather clumsy piece of machinery. *City Lights* must be regarded then as a succession of brilliant episodes. And it would be difficult to conceive anything more brilliant or more varied. The sense of tragedy prevails, as it has consistently prevailed in Mr. Chaplin's later films, but *City Lights* contains many passages as excruciatingly funny as anything he has produced. The humour has, on occasion, a sinister touch which is new to me. Observe carefully the incident of the cat and the flower pot, and how the self-satisfied wagging of a cat's tail on an empty scene can suggest the whole cruelty of the universe.

The proof of Mr. Chaplin's genius lies in the fact that he is able to use themes of an elemental simplicity, which would frighten off everyone else. A blind flower girl succoured by a tramp! It is difficult to imagine a theme leading more straight to disaster. One touch of Barrie, one touch even of Dickens, and the thing would become quite intolerable. But he has not a touch of Barrie's whimsicality and he has an iron self-control lacking to Dickens. Continually moving on a razor edge, he never falls into the innumerable gulfs which await him. The mere choice of such a theme seems an act of almost divine bravado, and proves a Napoleonic ability to trust one's star.

Mr. Chaplin's refusal to have anything to do with "talkies" has been much commented on and highly praised. This praise is no doubt deserved. But it is really difficult to see how he could do anything else. For he is the least realistic, the least "photographic" of artists. He is an artist of pure tempo and of pure vision. The speed at which he moves is generally completely out of proportion with the speed of anyone else on the stage at the same time. Half his effects are gained by the mere confusion of times, and the emotional value he can get out of conflicting speeds. On the other side, he is the very genius of sight—who sees resemblances between things which no one has seen before. His disasters are frequently due to incredible mistakes about the identity of objects, which no one has as yet thought of confusing. This is the pure art of pantomime, from which speech is quite inevitably absent. And hence it may be plausibly argued that however amusing a talkie is, or however beautiful the material at the photographer's disposal, it can never be a work of art, because it postulates a hopeless confusion of genres. To see Mr. Chaplin after two years of "talkies" is to realise with increased force the truth of this theory.

There is no great reason to describe or to commend any particular Chaplin film, because presumably anyone who ever goes to a picture goes to a new Chaplin. Further, just as the complete *Comédie humaine* is more important than any single novel by Balzac, so the complete work of Chaplin

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is more important than any individual performance. You feel behind the mass of them the most effective personality probably in the art of the day, certainly the most important moral force. The truths that Mr. Chaplin illustrates seem to me the most important of truths. Yet he never preaches. There is never a moment of propaganda in his work. Everything springs spontaneously from his view of the universe and from the fact that he offers no solution, neither a huge bank balance nor a communally-owned tractor, for the sorrows that afflict the human race. He can offer us nothing but the dignity of the inner life, the essential solitude of the soul. He would also say, I imagine, that only by being ridiculous can we obtain moral grandeur. Never in the history of art can there have been a greater enemy of shams.

Mr. Bax's Venice

The Venetian, at the Little Theatre, is a beautifully written play. The dialogue is cool, careful and simple, shunning alike the easy, intolerable Renaissance "colouring" of the period hack, and the equally intolerable self-conscious modernism of which Mr. Shaw, for instance, is sometimes guilty.

Yet *The Venetian* is not altogether satisfying—perhaps because Mr. Bax has never yet fully realised exactly what are the demands of the theatre. Situation, suspense, violent emotion, contrast, dilemmas and decisions—you will find them all in the play, the whole bag of tricks which the dramatist uses to cheat us for our pleasure. But none of them is used to its full dramatic advantage. It is as though the author were a little ashamed of them, and anxious to get through with the sorry business of trotting them out as unobtrusively as possible. The result is a play of bouquet rather than body, of passions reflected rather than expressed. Charming settings and beautiful costumes apart, the production is hardly calculated to give the piece its full value. There were some particularly tiresome accents among the male characters, with Mr. Wilfrid Walter himself as a minor offender in the matter of genteelism among the vowels—an unhappy flaw in an otherwise admirably dignified and impressive Francesco. The Cardinal, his brother, was played by Mr. Alistair Sim with what sounded like a North-of-Tweed accent, in a monotony of subtle turpitude (has history no record of a kindly Cardinal, by the way?). Miss Margaret Rawlings had her moments of magnificence, but very nearly threw the play out of gear by failing completely to indicate Bianca's development from high-spirited, passionate innocence to fiercely ambitious motherhood. In particular, her arch coquetry in the first scene went far to destroy what should have been a romantic piece of love-making to which the next scene provided a sequel of disillusion. Miss Miriam Adams and Miss Catherine Lacey, in minor parts, were astonishingly vivid and agreeably natural sinners.

Mr. Maugham Ten Years Ago

No new comedy as good as *The Circle* has been produced in the ten years since its first appearance. It is the story, you remember, of a young married woman who goes off with a man in spite of the warnings of her mother-in-law, who had made the same mistake thirty years previously. The play has hardly aged at all. Society has become rather laxer perhaps, and Lady Kitty's sad stories of being "cut" and having to live with her inferiors seem even less applicable to 1931 than they did to 1921. But it remains true that one can profit precious little by other people's experience; that there are occasions when present love is infinitely more important than future happiness; and that love is a very temporary form of insanity. On the other hand, the times are more favourable to women, and any girl born in the twentieth century is likely to be better able to look after herself, and at a pinch to support herself, than most women born in the nineteenth. But the young people in *The Circle* are cardboard anyhow. It is a play concerned with the tragedy and cruel comedy of old age: the protagonists are Lady Kitty, the husband she has deserted, and the lover she has prevented from deserting her. The photograph album scene is profoundly moving, the squabble about India and Barbados almost Swiftian in its comic horror, the card-table scene as amusing as anything I know. If we do not foresee a better life for Elizabeth than her mother-in-law has had, it is because Mr. Maugham gives us no reason to suppose that she is a better person. An elopement seems an extravagant way of satisfying her love, like burning a house to cook a rasher of bacon. All that is required is a little clandestine adultery. So perhaps the real moral of the play is that one should never fall in love with people who live at the Antipodes.

The production at the Vaudeville is a little sticky, but the acting is admirable. Miss Athene Seyler inclines to overact, perhaps because she is really too young for her part. But her collapse into old age in the last act is superb. Mr. Allan Aynesworth and Sir Nigel Playfair give two of the best performances I have ever seen, Sir Nigel bringing out delicately the priggishness in his role which a less conscientious actor would have suppressed. Mr. Peter Hannen is a rare charmer, and makes the young business man as eloquent as Mark Antony. He is a marvellous advertisement for the Cambridge Marlowe Society as the best possible training for the London stage. Mr. Vosper does his best with the one unsatisfactory character in the comedy, and Miss Celia Johnson does look as if she might run away, which Miss Fay Compton in the same part never did. Finally, it is a great and unusual pleasure to hear English as well spoken on the stage as it is by every member of the Vaudeville cast. *The Circle* deserves to takes its place with the small array of classical English comedies; and when it is given in 1941, and in 1991, I hope it will be as well acted as it is now.

* * *

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, March 7th.
- Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
- Edwin Fischer (piano) at the Wigmore Hall, 3.
- Dorothea Vincent (piano), at the Grotrian Hall, 3.15.
- "The White Devil," A.D.C., Cambridge.
- Rugby football, Royal Navy *v.* Army, Twickenham.
- Athletics, Oxford *v.* Cambridge, Stamford Bridge.

Sunday, March 8th.
- Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Furtwängler, Albert Hall, 3.

Monday, March 9th.
- "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "I Pagliacci," Carl Rosa Opera Company, Lyceum.
- Quadruple bill of one-act plays, produced by the 1930 Players, Faculty Theatre.
- Mr. E. K. Waterhouse on "The Family of Bellini," University College, 4.

Tuesday, March 10th.
- "O.H.M.S.," by R. Berkeley, at the New Theatre.
- National Hunt Steeplechase Meeting, Cheltenham.
- Mr. A. W. Hill on "Botany," Morley College, 8.

Wednesday, March 11th.
- B.B.C. Symphony Concert conducted by Oskar Fried, Queen's Hall, 8.

Thursday, March 12th.
- Royal Philharmonic Society (conductor, Sir Henry Wood), Queen's Hall, 8.15.
- Dr. A. M. Bassani on "Pompeii" (in Italian), University College, 5.30.
- "The Devil's Wedding," by Gluck, and "H.M.S. Pinafore," Birkbeck College Operatic Society, The College Theatre, 7.45.

Friday, March 13th.
- British Women's Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent, Queen's Hall, 8.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE are few who make a brag of madness. If there be any boasting left in the spirit of those who have overtopped reason, it more commonly shows itself in frantic asseverations of sanity, and in a tendency to include the rest of the world under a sentence of folly or mania. And if a man recovers from that desperate state he will go softly the rest of his life, and make no high mention of the time when his wits left him, and he saw things, as we say, out of all proportion. Whether there be any men, or any class of men, who can claim to possess complete sanity, it is impossible here to determine. Poets and saints, as individuals, may be allowed to possess sanity in a super-eminent degree; and of all occupations those which lead to the greatest sanity are, perhaps, they in which a man follows the sea. The very fantasticality of his life, led with such dangerous uncertainty on so inhumane an element, inspires him with sanity as a protection; but when sailors come on the land they are frequently the most excessive and eccentric of mortals, and wander from good sense as far as stockbrokers, economists, makers of big businesses, reviewers of novels, or even schoolmasters. While, however, we cannot certainly decide to whom the prize for sanity should be awarded, surely the prize for unreason must be given to those—among whom I boastfully rank myself—who collect many books. Boastfully, I say, because we are the men who brag of our madness—kleptomania, nymphomania, pyromania, monomania, these are words of disapprobation, and those who suffer from the complaints stigmatised are bashful and secretive; but bibliomania, a word scarcely two centuries old, has been a boast since old Dibdin produced his rather tedious guide-book.

* * *

To the investigation of this strange human complaint—it is, I think, confined to human beings, though it would be a suitable hobby for the long-lived creatures, the elephant or the parrot—Mr. Holbrook Jackson has brought, in *The Anatomy of Bibliomania* (Vol. I., Soncino Press, 28s.), his own erudition, versatility and charm, and the method immortalised by Robert Burton when he went anatomising melancholy. I have no words for the fascination that Mr. Jackson's book has for me; yet I have lived enough with those who do not share my proud affliction to realise that many will find his book a catalogue of human folly and wildness, a library of pedantic ineptitudes, a map to those sinister devices by which men fill an orderly house with dust-collecting material, insisting on keeping about them, taking air and using space, objects which should be borrowed from a lending library or a friend who is weak-minded enough to act as one. Such will find no pleasure in Mr. Jackson's book; but what a joy it will be to anyone who, in his schooldays, lunched on a bun to buy a book, or walked home in the rain, so saving threepence to be carefully invested in Farringdon Street or Booksellers' Row. Nor would I despair of giving the volume, as a tract, to work for the conversion of those who, in the quaint language of the drawing-room, are "fond of reading"; for among such can often be found people who suddenly come to recognise the true importance of literature in the world.

* * *

The greatest enemy of books is books; and few who care for literature, and desire to see its kingdom extended, are happy at the amount of time spent on books by those who have never learned the craft of reading but have been taught the business of it. In a world where there were fewer books and hardly any newspapers, bibliomania was intenser and purer. Yet in the noble end to his chapter, "A Pageant of Bookmen," Mr. Jackson can give us modern names as well as ancient.

Petrarch died alone in his library at Arqua, his head resting on an open book, the manuscript of his *Life of Cæsar* unfinished before him, as Plato is said to have died long before with his head on Sophron's *Jestes;* Fenton, the poet, died, in 1730, at Lady Trumbal's house at Easthampstead, among his *books and papers;* Leibnitz died in a chair with the *Argenis* of Barclay in his hand; when Sir William Osler was near his end, he asked to have Milton's *Nativity* read to him *from his precious first edition;* Francis Thompson's final companions were Jacobs's *Many Cargoes* and a prayer-book; Henry Bradshaw, our great bibliographer, was found dead by his servant in his room at Cambridge, sitting at his table, with a *little Irish book* in front of him. Leigh Hunt lived for books and, like Donne, prayed to die among them: *If fortune turns her face once more in kindness upon me before I go, I may chance, some quiet day, to lay my overbeating temples on a book, and so have the death I most envy.* Père Jacob, in his treatise on famous libraries, tells of his journey to Ferrara, where he visited the tomb of Cœlius, who was *buried among his books, at his own desire,* not, as he says, *like a miser in the midst of his riches,* but like a lover among the treasures of his heart. And methinks 'tis not altogether unfit that when these true lovers depart this life, they should thus pass away among the dear creations of the brain, confident belike that they will take up their joy, renew their old companionships, for as the poet sings:

> O then the bliss of blisses, to be freed
> From all the wants by which the world is driven;
> With liberty and endless time to read
> The libraries of Heaven!

* * *

They argue falsely who urge that books are the enemies of love or of religion, which are, with literature, the chief concern in this world of men of sense. It was a book that brought together Paolo and Francesca, and in a book their passion is immortalised; and we may indeed suppose that love has owed much of its growth in refinement, in delicacy, and in imaginative intensity to the fact that literature has always been at its service. Nor is religion less indebted to books, or to those mad about them, as all candid students of that subject must admit—the faiths which have no literature curiously end by having no life, and disappear uneasily in a mutter of superstition. Bibliomania, then, to my mind needs no defence; for to be mad about books is to be mad about life, for though there be some who would use books as a refuge from life, their reading will certainly toss them back again into the sea from which they would escape. Man can evade the art of living by an addiction to business, or pleasure, or philanthropy, but never by a devotion to literature. So, just as the little things in life may justifiably occupy the attention, for a moment, of men who live intensely and for realities, so may those who care for literature pleasure themselves with details about books. To all such I would heartily commend the series *Bibliographia*, edited by Mr. Michael Sadleir, and published beautifully and with rare appropriateness of dress and decoration by Constable. Three new volumes have recently been issued—Mr. Guy Chapman's and Mr. Hodgkin's *Bibliography of William Beckford* (25s.), Mr. R. W. Chapman's *Cancels* (20s.) and Mr. Greville Worthington's *Bibliography of the Waverley Novels* (24s.). Only five hundred copies of each book are issued. Over them the true bibliophile will linger with affectionate care. They will give the same pleasure that is afforded to other men by details of a Steeplechase, or how someone played the Ninth Hole. Mr. R. W. Chapman's essay is of the first importance to all librarians, and to collectors of rare books, as it deals with that most troublesome of problems, the cancelled leaf—a point in a book which often means the difference between a very valuable and an ordinarily good copy. No one would claim that the study of these things is literature; but they belong to it, and no one who loves books, and watches his shelves fill with the treasures he has with difficulty found, will despise these minor aids to scholarship, or, if you wish, these lighter symptoms of the great passion Bibliomania. For a bookman to despise them is as bad as it would be for a lover to contemn songs to his lady's eyes, or for a man of religion to scoff at images. It is through images we reach and express the truth; and of all images the greatest is the Book.

RICHARD SUNNE.

NEW NOVELS

The Three Brothers. By EDWIN MUIR. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.
Ra-Tau, Father of Lions. By CASALIS DE PURY. Allan. 7s. 6d.
An Angel in the Room. By GERARD HOPKINS. Mundanus. 8s.
A Richer Dust. By STORM JAMESON. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.
Dermotts Rampant. By STEPHEN MCKENNA. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

The Three Brothers is a fine, far-reaching book. The story of David Blackadder, a young man of nervous, sensitive temperament, is timed in the reign of Mary Stuart, when religious feeling in Scotland reached its greatest tension; Mr. Muir, in fact, has obviously chosen this period so as to intensify the effect of conflicting ideas upon David's thoughtful and impressionable mind. Thus, though *The Three Brothers* is a story of the sixteenth century, it might be a story of any time, in so far as it concerns the development of David himself and the conditions of Scottish farm life. Mr. Muir knows a great deal about Scottish life, and keeping within the bounds of a surely-drawn historical setting, he has brought out those characteristics of the country Scot that have lasted changelessly from untold centuries down to the present time. This in itself is no mean achievement.

David's childhood and his life with his parent and brothers are told with sensitive imagination:

> . . . there was a particular mystery about the two great volumes in the closet which could be discovered only by opening them. Then before their eyes would lie strange things, not merely the dry black signs on the parchment. Archie thought of rows of golden coins, of daggers, jewels, tiny staffs studded with rubies, and coloured stuffs and scraps of ribbon such as he had seen in his mother's chest. . . . But to David the books were filled with some ethereal substance which he thought of as a dust or a fume, golden and red and blue, and perpetually restless and turning; and on the changing surface appeared and vanished brilliant stars, and galleons, and towers, and angels, and armies moving, and giants, and great landscapes, and devils.

Especially fine in these early chapters is the portrait of David's father. His brother Sandy does not come alive till nearer the end of the book, and Archie always remains a flat character, complacent, successful and unexplained. Then, from the time that David leaves the farm for good, the plot begins slightly to creak. Adept at following a thought through his hero's mind, Mr. Muir is less successful in following his hero through the misadventures that beset him in the world outside. David is rather clumsily brought to Edinburgh, where he falls in love with Ellen. But Mr. Muir is not interested in Ellen's mental equipment, so she never comes to life, and the reader cannot discover what on earth David saw in this weakly-sketched young woman hunting feverishly for a mate. Even her murder—off-stage—makes but a slight impression, especially as the murderer shoots into the story knife in hand, unheralded and unknown, vanishing again with equal lack of ceremony and leaving the reader to wish that Mr. Muir cared a little more about the construction of a story. The whole Ellen episode—and unfortunately it is very important in the making of David's character—is an example of understatement carried to a slightly ludicrous extreme. Mr. Muir is no Greek tragedian: he is a sensitive rather than a forceful writer, and cannot afford, when he reaches an emotional crisis, to drop what force he has and take refuge in hurried, off-stage methods. But the death of Sandy Blackadder brings him back into his element. Sandy was a Calvinist of a kind that abounded in the days of John Knox, that still abounds; a creature with a deep-rooted sense of inferiority perverted into a lust for power. His death-bed confession is one of the best things Mr. Muir has ever written:

> And then my father and my mither werena rightly—I thought at the time—my true father and my true mither; I was an outcast from them; so what was more natural than that I should think myself reserved for a better fate, and pride myself on being one of the chosen of God, ay, one of the elect . . . I was just the same, only that now I was looked up to by my fellow-believers; for I wouldna let anybody excel me e'en then, although God's election of me should have lifted me far above such things. . . . The more I lost faith, the more fanatical I grew in outward seeming; but all the time I hated myself, and my brethren, and the Catholics and everybody—I was just filled with hatred.

The novel ends with extracts from David's diary including a vision of the Day of Judgment, which is remarkable in itself, though it is perhaps a little difficult to say what it is doing there.

Despite its occasional dramatic flights, *The Three Brothers* is essentially a novel of thought rather than of action. *Ra-Tau* is a novel of thrilling action, and an unusual one at that. It is far removed from the ordinary lion-and-gun story of the veldt. It is dominated by the astonishing, half-mythical, wholly real figure of Smith, whom the surgeon-naturalist teller of the story met by chance and accompanied on what was to prove a disastrous expedition. Smith is full of ideas and anecdotes, he discourses upon animals and insects, the characteristics of the French, lion-hunting, gambling and theosophy, the diamond-rush to Kimberley and the gold-rush to the Rand. Interwoven with Smith's absorbing conversation are delightful descriptions of animals and scenery, and a story of vivid and thrilling excitement. But to give away the plot would be to spoil it. The book, which is very well translated, must be read.

An Angel in the Room is its antithesis, for this contains neither story nor—one must admit—idea. It is just a desperate effort at being clever. The whole book consists of a detailed analysis of five people at a dinner-party. One of the characters takes the first 4½ pages to mount the stairs; after that the author assumes omniscience and steps into each mind in turn. Yet omniscience is scarcely worth having if it can but tear the veil from such a mediocre quintet and raise nothing better than a storm in a finger-bowl. There is uneasiness with the caviare, suspicion with the *sole frite*, a hint of drama with the *tournedos*, when the hostess sees her husband looking at his neighbour with a lust-light in his eye. No more than a hint, however, and the conventions of a Chelsea dining-room remain outwardly unbroken. If only somebody had thrown a plate! Action being impossible, it would seem that dining-room drama needs wit at least to make it palatable, and Mr. Hopkins has none to supply. The conversation trudges as drearily as at a thousand other Chelsea dinner-tables, and the reader will probably reflect that boredom is inevitable when people will eat too much.

With *A Richer Dust* Miss Storm Jameson brings to an end her long story of Mary Hansyke—Roxby—Hervey. In this volume the story is taken up again years after Richard Roxby has died of fever in Charleston, with the coming of his almost grown-up daughter to fall in love with Clara Roxby's son Nicholas. It takes the Roxby and Hervey families through the war, ending with Mary's death at the age of eighty. In this last volume of the trilogy, Miss Jameson goes back to the methods she so successfully employed in *A Lovely Ship*, and the result is a much better book than *The Voyage Home*. Miss Jameson has recaptured her sense of the ridiculous, which is extremely strong, and which makes one remember *A Lovely Ship* as a much less gloomy story than it really is. Some day she may realise what a first-rate comic novel she could write. For Miss Jameson is not in the least a sensitive writer, she cannot draw a character with fine lines, she can only go on piling up details until the required effect is reached—and overreached. There are fewer purely flat characters in this book than in *The Voyage Home* (one suspects that even Miss Jameson grew a little tired of the second generation) and the tendency to caricature has returned. Mary herself has become an aged monstrosity, but she is more amusing than she has been since childhood. But was anybody ever quite so cast-iron as Mary, quite so helpless as Clara, so forbearing as young Nicholas, so grossly and inconsiderately "modern" as young Nicholas's wife Jenny? And does any family in real life so persistently fall in love with its step-cousins or so obstinately marry its cousins by marriage? Miss Jameson's poetic young love is something one cannot even wish to believe in, and her conception of old age is of something that continually thinks about the past. From sixty onwards, Mary bestows on us innumerable carbon copies of the last page of Mr. Strachey's *Queen Victoria*. But Miss Jameson is eminently readable, she has the gift of story-telling, and she has brought her family saga to a fitting conclusion.

Mr. McKenna's Dermotts also ramp through several generations—as a matter of fact they quite cease to ramp with the second. But Mr. McKenna does not succeed, as Miss Jameson does, in making the reader want to know what happens to his family. They are just a series of mouthpieces for a history of political ideas from the Boer War to 1921, and the book is an elaboration of the not unknown thesis that "the innovator in one generation becomes the conservative in the next."

> During my own lifetime I have heard Tories sighing, under the scorpions of Gladstone, for the whip of Palmerstone; in terror of Bright, they had invoked the moderating influence of Gladstone; and in disgust with Lloyd George they spoke reverently of "Mister" Bright. It is still as true now as when I hinted it to the Fletcher children thirty years ago that the only difference between us was the pace at which we wanted to adapt our institutions. No more now than then will they admit it. And yet it was but yesterday that Ramsay MacDonald was compared unfavourably with John Burns;

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already they are saying that they would sleep more easily if the Labour Party contained more statesmen of MacDonald's kind and fewer of the Wheatley and Maxton kidney. Are we hastening by successive plunges into reeking revolution?

Well, the idea is not very new, the love-story is not very exciting, and the dialogue is rendered very staccato by its peppering of dots. . . .

"America," he informed me, "is still a geographical expression. The American nation is something invented by journalists."

"Come! An aggregate of nearly a hundred millions must have some place . . .", I persisted.

And surely not even the Victorian child was so politically precocious as Mr. McKenna makes him.

PROTEUS.

THE MAKING OF IRELAND

A History of Ireland and Her People. Vol. II. From the Stuart Period to Modern Times. By ELEANOR HULL. Harrap. 18s.

Miss Hull deserves all the sympathy due to those who attempt an ungrateful task, due more particularly from the writer of this notice, who has also tried in his time to give a fairly balanced account of Irish history. There is fun to be had in reeling off a spirited piece of partisan declamation; every century and every decade is fertile in themes for denunciation. Or again, if you are happy enough to share Macaulay's robust conviction that a portion of the British Crown's subjects were so placed that their misery was necessary to Britain's prosperity and their servitude to British freedom, why then you can make a jubilant masterpiece out of narrating the Siege of Derry or the Battle of the Boyne. But for a person who can see two sides to the picture it is difficult to say whether the seventeenth century or the eighteenth or the nineteenth offers more occasion for disgust. It is not merely the successive stupidities and bad faith or brutalities of those who held power in the name of England that sadden and sicken; it is the spectacle of really noble figures, Owen Roe O'Neill, Sarsfield, or Grattan, hampered and hamstrung by the damning defects of those who, working with them in name, really thwarted them at every movement. How was Miss Hull to produce a book that should be pleasant to read? She has not done it. But the thoroughness of her work makes it always enlightening; and she can at least lay this to her soul that she has helped to make clear beaten paths of knowledge through what even twenty years ago was a dense jungle of the confusedly unknown.

That was less true of the period covered in this volume than in her earlier one; Lecky had been before her. If I have a reproach to make it is that she has made too little use of the advantage she possesses over Lecky in her knowledge of Irish. Mr. Corkery's beautiful and significant book *The Hidden Ireland* might have suggested some pages to deal with the native Ireland's tenacious effort to preserve something of the hereditary Gaelic culture; with groups of farmers making here and there their local school of poetry. Another thing which she has perhaps handled too slightly is the actual conditions of life prevailing among the Irish peasantry and their effect on them. Chesterfield says somewhere in his Letters, by way of commending a vegetable diet, that the Irish who live almost entirely on potatoes are "the strongest bodies of men that I have seen anywhere in Europe." Mrs. Asenath Nicholson in *Ireland's Welcome to the Stranger* (recently re-edited as *The Bible in Ireland*) gives a most detailed picture of life in the cottages on the eve of the great famine; it puts flesh and blood in the dry bones of the Devon Commission's report; and it gives the same impression of abounding physical vigour in the race — which Ireland does not give to-day. Yet the standard of living is much higher—it could not well be otherwise, for in 1840 it was the level of bare subsistence. Emigration has drained the people too cruelly; and marriages are now by no means generally marriages of the young. Miss Hull notes the fact of the emigration but hardly dwells enough on its consequences.

I should have liked, too, some more detail than is here about the Ireland overseas. In the seventeenth and eighteenth its people were to be found among the Catholic nations of the Continent—France, Spain and Austria chiefly; a native Irishman going abroad nearly always went to connections of his own—just as he does now in America. From the end of the eighteenth century America took the place of Europe. In America full citizenship was available; whereas even in the Irish Brigade of France the Irish remained in a manner aliens; their descendants, the Lally Tollendals, ceased entirely to be Irish. In America they could, and they did, preserve their first nationality even when they acquired another; and connections with France and Spain were to some extent broken—for the further reason that from 1793 onward the British army opened a career to Catholic Irishmen.

Yet the traces of that old alliance, which were strong upon O'Connell (in some ways the most typical Gael of modern history) still survive, and Ireland, now coming to control of her own destiny, begins to open again some of the old lines of communication. There is now for the first time in my recollection a strong element of cultivated foreigners in Dublin society, mainly owing to the presence of diplomatic representatives, ministers and consuls-general—a very valuable addition to our culture. We have drawn on Germany, France, Belgium and Czechoslovakia for aid in new and important undertakings; and though we shall not be sending them military leaders like Lally, or political chiefs like Wall in Spain, there are signs already that they come to observe for instance what an able minister of agriculture has been doing to improve our main interest of stockbreeding.

However, it is more important to point out what is in Miss Hull's careful work than what is not; and above all there is this. Her history is the first that has been able to link up the past history of Irish government as it was directed from England with a balanced section describing the start of self-government in the Free State—which has now got well past the experimental stage. She writes as a whole-hearted supporter of the Treaty and has no use for Mr. de Valera. Nor for that matter have I. Yet it would be foolish to ignore that Mr. de Valera has retained the allegiance of a great body of Irish men and women and no one denies his earnest sincerity. He and those who work with him will necessarily some day have to put their hands to work of construction; there is no need to doubt that responsibility will sober their judgment.

Certain documents are added as appendices, some like the various forms of the parliamentary oath suggested having precise historical value; but with them are a speech and a poem by Pearse, and some passages on Moral Force and Freedom by Terence MacSwiney. There could be no better proof of Miss Hull's fitness for her task than her perception that these should be known to such as desire to follow Ireland's fortune from the black past into its still clouded but brightening present.

A few corrections are needed. On page 362 it seems implied that the "Plan of Campaign" was started while Mr. Gladstone's administration was in power; it came after the defeat of Home Rule, not before it. On page 364 it is wrong to say that Dilke was carried by Chamberlain into withdrawal from support of Gladstone; he was a Home Ruler and always remained one. At page 383 it is not correct that William O'Brien broke off from Redmond because the Irish Council Bill was rejected; on the contrary, he and Healy rejoined the main body for a brief period in 1908. On page 396 it should be noted that Redmond's juncture with the Volunteer movement was decided by the Curragh incident and the Larne gun-running. Again, on page 400 it is not correct that recruiting dropped as a consequence of the split in the Volunteer organisation after the beginning of the war; it had hardly begun then, and grew steadily till the Coalition in May, 1915, checked it. On page 401 Tom Clarke is classed as a Labour man. He was *par excellence* an old Fenian. It is more important to correct the statement that "the arrival of Lord French as Viceroy with Mr. Short as Chief was a signal for ever-increasing repression." They came to call off conscription. The change really dates from January, 1919, when Lord French lay at the point of death and Mr. Macpherson, coming in as Chief Secretary, was completely captured by extreme reactionaries. French did not return till April, and then even was a much-weakened man. But he desired to give Ireland fair play, till the campaign of organised killing forced his hand and roused his temper.

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He had much sympathy with the appeal signed by 150 Irish ex-officers that the Peace Conference should consider the case of Ireland; and he never wavered from the position that the promises on the faith of which Irish Nationalists went to the war must be kept; in other words, a measure of Home Rule must be given. STEPHEN GWYNN.

LYRICAL MOMENTS

The Heart's Unreason. Poems by EDWARD DAVISON. Goffancz. 6s.

Now at Eve. By EVAN J. THOMAS. Mathews and Marrot. 4s. 6d.

The Epic of Jutland. By SHANE LESLIE. Benn. 10s. 6d.

Lyrical poetry tends to concern itself with the agreeable conventions of flower, bird and season. Banish these conventions and one remembers with surprise that there still remains another world of expression, that of the heart itself. The distinctive quality which one recognises at once in Mr. Edward Davison's new book is the curious sense of identity between the poet and his subject. He is haunted by time's transience and its losses, but verse is to him no "sad mechanic exercise" by which escape can be made, rather in the medium emotion finds its own persistence. In one of these poems he describes the writer who has given all of his early years to Poetry, Truth and Nature:

> Yet in the end deserted
> He sees them, broken-hearted,
> Pursued by others younger
> And knows them his no longer

—and the flawed rhymes seemed to echo that sense of bewildered loss. The poet who has thought and felt too eagerly, in his first fine careless rapture, cannot console himself as the athlete who can polish and put his row of silver cups on the mantelpiece.

It is about seven years since Mr. Davison's last book of poems appeared in this country, and it is interesting to note how little his work has been influenced outwardly by his residence in America. In a poem, lovely in its balancing of lines, he tells how he looked from an American train window:

> I saw three swans, white on the dark water
> Under a green bank, indolently gliding.
> The day looked windless-grey and the sky stormy.
> They, unperturbed and imperturbable, shone
> In their fixed world serenely: though our clamour
> Shook the near trees it had not shaken them.

—and he thought of that sea-captain, "Jefferson's friend," who had robbed the moat at Windsor to stock the wild with a royal breed. But mostly in these new poems he lingers by "Lethe's backwaters," and they are overshadowed by English willows. Recollection is vivified by persistent emotion, and the quiet, poignant sentiment of a passage such as this is typical:

> what's left to do
> But dream alone until the day I die
> On some imagined memory of you?
> Believe there was a day when for a space
> I looked into your unaverted eyes
> To feel my spirit awake at their embrace
> Articulate and beautiful and wise?
> Or dream I hear your voice in the dim pause
> Of dawn, ere birds awake, and feel your hand
> Seek mine, when some night-fancy overawes
> Your gentle thoughts, knowing I understand?
> Better to falsify you thus and rest
> Than know myself for ever dispossessed.

This sense of emotion defined and yet unresolved by the intellect gives the poems their lyrical quality. Even in the objective poems this quality is found, as in that quaint, half-sad, half-mocking snatch:

> "Who will heal your bloody breast,
> Gentle pelican, tender pelican?"
> "Brack and brine will try their best
> And the sun will do the rest,"
> Said the gentle pelican.

The sense of mortality is curiously dominant in *Now at Eve*, and may well have been prescient, for the young author died before the publication of his book. These verses, too, come from memories; and one sees always the figure of a boy watching from the window of a Yorkshire manse the desolate and rain-swept hills or listening at night to the eerie winds:

> Storm beset, this house became
> A music haunted well of sound,
> Islanded in mist it seemed
> A closed lake dwelling, water bound.

Even outside London the suburban roads, dark and wet at night, brought the poet thoughts of those far moorlands. Sincerity and a rather gloomy preoccupation with Nature in its darker moods give these poems intensity, though they always fall short in expression.

Epics are still written, but the difficulty about them is that they remain in the building dock, and we never see them gliding down the slips amid acclaim to the tide of popularity. Mr. Shane Leslie's epic poem of the Jutland battle will appeal, according to the wrapper, "to the simple sailor rather than the literary dilettante." But that is begging the question, and one feels that the "simple sailor" will scarcely appreciate Mr. Leslie's flamboyant departures from the Dryden couplet as in—

> Antares foameth like a bulb of gore.
> South-East the Serpent sloughs her jewelled cast,
> While Ophiuchus hurls her brightness past—

though he may weigh those shells that

> With somersault and skip and flash and hop
> Rend men and ships to blood-and-thunder scenes
> And iridescent sea to smithereens.

In his epic simile of the Grand Fleet sailing out in the likeness of England's ancient minsters and cathedrals Mr. Leslie certainly achieves a *tour de force*, but he is mostly concerned in rendering accurately and with all naval technicality the details of that intricate sea-fight. In this sense his epic is an unusual departure from sea poems of storm and stress.

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> One window looks out on my garden, and beyond is my orchard; another window discloses the upper slopes of the hillside on which my house is built, slopes crowned by forest land, while a little stream winds and splashes from its source to my garden; from the third window I gaze over roofs of all heights and angles and colours to the great bright river on which slow-moving barges go from Havre to Paris, and on the other side of the river are green uplands, with here and there a curtain of poplars without which no French countryside is complete, and dotted in little hollows are a number of villages, and above them is a dark row of pines against a white sky.

Contemplating these things, their colours changing as the hours change, from green to gold, from blue to purple, he is, and no wonder, "well content with the passage and panorama of time."

He believes, in fact, that he has found at Sainte-Ursule his special *coin de terre*, that one satisfying abiding-place which, according to his philosophy, waits somewhere for all men, though not all have the luck to discover it. Not that he has given himself wholly to the rural life. Paris, so near on the map, so remote in spirit, is still his workshop, where he must go for that knowledge of the movements of the larger world which has given him his high position among the journalists. But he returns to Sainte-Ursule for rest and refreshment, to reconsider his values and cultivate the garden which he describes with the loving particularity of a Hole.

He has come to know and love the place in every season of the year, and he has won the friendship of its inhabitants, who do not easily open their hearts or minds to strangers. He makes us acquainted with them, with their speech and their lore, their habits and eccentricities, just as he makes us acquainted with the orchards and fields among which they live and the swallows that build beneath their eaves. In a dedicatory letter to a friend he writes:

> I will tell you of the flowers and of the fruit, of the different seasons of the year, of the trees and of the stars, and of the little winds that wander between the river and the hills; and I will tell you of the piccolo parties and the village fêtes, of the Mayor and the Curé and of all my good companions—the garde-champêtre, the shepherd, the archæologist, the farmers, and particularly of my friend, Monsieur Pierre Vernon, and his caustic observations; and I will tell you of weddings and of funerals, and a few of the countless things that happen; and I will tell you tales as they were told to me; and I will tell you of the deep thoughts of man's destiny as they come to me, living my simple life between the river and the hills; and it may be that you will find quiet entertainment and unpresumptuous teaching in this book of mine which I shall write in my peaceful village by the Seine.

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A Tribute to Michael Faraday. By ROLLO APPLEYARD. Constable. 7s. 6d.

This concise and pleasantly illustrated account of Faraday's life and work—a centenary commemoration of his most notable achievement, the induction of electrical currents—makes no attempt to replace earlier and fuller biographies of the great scientist. Mr. Appleyard has visited the old Yorkshire homestead of the Faradays, which seems to be more than the London-born Michael ever did, and has unearthed from church registers and so forth some interesting if not very illuminating ancestral details. For the rest he summarises the familiar facts with directness, drawing informatively upon the letters and journals, and perhaps rightly judging the Davy and Wollaston controversies to be of no great interest after all these years. The latter portion of the book shows Faraday in his various public capacities as advocate of science-teaching in the public schools, as correspondent of other famous figures, and as chemist and physicist in the laboratory. The two longest chapters are headed "Experiment and Mathematical Analysis" and "Electricity from Ordinary Magnetism," and explain the essential discoveries clearly though of necessity in terms which demand an elementary knowledge at least of the subjects. Extracts from his commonplace books and diaries reveal the range of interest, the accuracy of observation, the persistence in experiment, and something of the imaginative quality, all of which combined to make Faraday one of the foremost of English scientists.

Life and Evolution: An Introduction to General Biology. By S. J. HOLMES. Black. 12s. 6d.

In his preface Professor Holmes tells us that this work is intended for use as a text-book in schools and universities, and has been particularly devised to meet the needs of general students rather than prospective specialists in different branches of the science; but he expresses the hope that it may prove useful also to the general reader who is curious in regard to the content and import of modern biology. The general reader who is not curious in this regard must find his reading, if it is at all general, singularly unintelligible; for the content and import of modern biology is implicit in almost everything that is written. On the whole, one imagines it is the last and secondary object of the book that it will serve best in this country. Schools and colleges are already well supplied with text-books, but scientific works which are agreeably, simply and authoritatively written are not too numerous, and are to be welcomed by laymen, especially by those who find the technical terms of modern science a stumbling block. Professor Holmes cannot, of course, avoid all use of such terms, but he is as economical as possible, and the glossary he supplies is particularly well compiled.

Marlowe: A Conspectus. By J. M. ROBERTSON. Routledge. 6s.

Mr. Robertson, in his new book, sifts out, from supposedly Shakespearean scenes and rhythms those plays and passages into which "the vast curves of the gradual violin" enter rarely, or not at all, and credits them to Marlowe. He divides his book into three parts, of which the first is an interesting study of the poet's life and character, with a chronology of the plays; the second a survey of his performances; the third a detailed investigation of assignable collaborative work, both outside and in the Folio. Marlowe's death he imputes rather to Kyd than to Thomas Walsingham, or to Raleigh, and considers professional jealousy to have been the motive, though he examines carefully all traces of Marlowe's activities as one of Walsingham's spies.

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Above the Dark Circus. By HUGH WALPOLE. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Walpole almost succeeded in spoiling our pleasure in this neat little thriller by his threat, in the dedication, that a new Herries book is to be published in the autumn; but we forgot that in our enjoyment of *Above the Dark Circus*. The tale of Pengelly's treachery and murder is told by one of those witless, fatheaded young men whom novelists like to choose as their mouthpieces; occasionally the voice is evidently Mr. Walpole's own, but the sensitive reader will scarcely notice the change of narrators. John Osmund, Helen, his wife, Pengelly, Pengelly's brother, and Dick Gunn, the "I" of the story, are elegant lay-figures, the study of whose characters never tempts one away from the story. Osmund is a vapouring bore with a trick of false rhetoric, but he is a good man of action, and the story's finale in the theatre is as exciting as the mad party which is a prelude to it. We wish Mr. Walpole would stick to this kind of fiction.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

I WAS surprised the other day to find so acute a critic as Mr. Ernest Newman complaining that there was no really successful Mephistophelian music, and suggesting that this failure was possibly due to a prudent reluctance on the part of composers to side with the Prince of Darkness. Mr. Newman was still a little damped by a broadcast performance of Liszt's *Dante* Symphony, one of the master's less successful studies in the macabre, or he would surely not have forgotten the daemonic qualities of Liszt's finest music. As an Abbé, Liszt was privileged to show a keener interest in and sympathy with the seamy side of life than would have passed unremarked in the mere layman. Unfortunately, his bravura, vulgar ostentation and conjuring tricks (the traditional social mannerisms, be it remembered, of the Devil himself), have blinded people to the very real grimness of much of his music. With the possible exception of certain works by Berlioz, Liszt's finest works provide the only musical counterpart to the diabolism which is so great a feature of the nineteenth century Romantic movement in Literature. This will probably be unrecognised as long as pianists continue to restrict themselves to a handful of his least characteristic drawing-room pieces, and as long as virtuoso conductors can still make an effect with *Les Preludes*. How often do we get a performance even of the recognised masterpieces, such as the *Faust Symphony* and the *Piano Sonata*? Why does no pianist give a group of the later *Années de Pelerinage*?

Curiously enough, nearly all Liszt's best piano pieces, from the early *Il Penseroso* to the late *Funeral-Gondola* are obsessed with the sinister; and far from feeling that it is an assumed morbidity, we come to feel that Liszt's more sanctimonious and treacly pieces were a deliberate escape from the demon within him. It is interesting to notice that many of his bare and sinister effects are actually achieved by comparatively conventional means. A sentimental progression of chords is made to assume an altogether strange significance in much the way that a simple dance tune will evoke a vision of horror and desolation

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in the mind of a listener who is under the influence of Cannabis-indica.

Mr. Newman, in the passage I referred to, suggests that Wagner, if he had essayed it, would have been the most successful diabolist in music. I feel myself that he lacked on the one hand the austerity, on the other, the hysteria. There was a very solid backing of comfortable sensual idealism to Wagner's nature. I think I am right in saying that it was he who suggested the "redemption by woman" ending, to the otherwise magnificently cynical finale of the *Faust Symphony*. We have only to compare the Bacchanale from *Tannhäuser* with Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz* to see the enormous difference between the two minds. The Venusberg music is the rich man's conception of a gay week-end in Paris, whereas the *Mephisto Waltz* is a work of the most profound imagination and is possessed by a sort of sterile frenzy that removes it altogether from the usual class of danse macabre. I have yet to find a complete edition or bibliography of Liszt so it is a little difficult to place his works. The *Mephisto Waltz No.* 1 for orchestra is one of two episodes from Lenau's *Faust* (the other, less well known, is the *Procession by Night*), and is substantially the same as the *Mephisto Waltz* for piano. It has, however, an optional, alternative ending (not used on this occasion).

The *Mephisto Waltz No.* 2 is an entirely different piece, though equally interesting. H.M.V. have issued *No.* 1 played by the London Symphony Orchestra under Albert Coates. There are, unless I am mistaken, one or two cuts and the performance is a little on the fast side, but both players and conductor have caught the right spirit of diablerie. The recording is magnificent. (H.M.V. 12 in. D1928).

The principal features of a not very distinguished list of records are three works by Beethoven; the *Septet*, the *G. Major Violin Sonata, Op.* 30 and the *Fifth Symphony*. The *Violin Sonata* is superbly played by Kreisler and Rachmaninoff, a rare combination of two stars who are as good together as they are individually. The balance, always a tricky affair with this combination of instruments, is very satisfactory and for once the piano has been brought into the same aural plane as the violin. (H.M.V. 2 12 in. DB1463–4). This sonata is hardly Beethoven at his best, it remains on too unimpassioned a level to reveal to us the composer's most distinctive qualities. There is a quiet charm in the *tempo di minuetto*, but the bustling finale loses all its high spirits through a wearisome repetition of the same joke. The point is, that in this type of movement, Beethoven was excelled, not only by Mozart and Haydn, but by quite minor composers, as we see if we listen to the delightful *Allegro con brio* from Boccherini played with great finish by the Poltronieri String Quartet. (Columbia 10 in. DB397).

Another charming record of much the same type is the first and third movements of Mozart's *F Major Sonata No.* 7, played on violin and cembalo by Grete Eweler and Alice Ehlers (Parlophone 12 in. E11099).

The cembalo tone records excellently and balances well with the violin. The finale has an altogether fascinating wit and grace. It is just this fine edge of wit that is lacking in the Beethoven *Septet*. (Columbia five 12 in. LX109–13 in album). The work is beautifully played by three members of the Léner Quartet and four English players, including the redoubtable Mr. Brain on the horn. The work is full of amiable humour but never seems to rise above a certain level. One regrets that Beethoven did not essay the same combination in his later and more contrapuntal period. This type of medium requires not only a greater contrapuntal sense than Beethoven possessed at that time but a more contrapuntal sense of orchestration. (Anyone who remembers the Mozart wind and piano quintet will see what I mean). The *Septet* lacks inevitability. There are times when it suggests not so much a chosen group of boon companions as one of those arbitrary groupings due to military or financial reasons. There is always something a little melancholy about the efforts of a tempestuous character such as Beethoven to put one at one's ease, and I turned to the *Fifth Symphony* with the pleasant anticipation of hearing him at his most characteristic and in a form in which he reigns supreme.

Unfortunately, the performance of this work by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Franz Schalk, does not, from the point of view of ensemble, rhythm, and balance, reach the standard that we have a right to expect from any reputable orchestra playing a well-known work. As this orchestra has previously made some excellent records, one is inclined to blame the conductor. The opening is frankly appalling; and one is charitably forced to believe that it is due to some defect in the microphone, or flaw in the record itself. Quite apart from that I can remember no performance of this work in which the balance was so bad or the rhythm so slipshod.

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The third ramp is considerably less outrageous, and is not a ramp when the motorist is rather a foolish person. The book advises him to drain his sump at stated intervals; 2,000 miles is the distance usually cited, but some handbooks prefer 1,000 miles. As the retail price of a full ration of good oil for a sump may be 12s., and as some cars cover 15,000 miles in the year, quite an appreciable sum of money is involved. But a little thought and a little knowledge surround this counsel with all kinds of interrogation marks. Not very long ago a famous French driver covered 12,000 miles in a Buick car without draining the sump, and without adding any very substantial quantity of oil. At the end of this distance the remaining oil was tested by an expert, and found to be in very satisfactory condition. Obviously, if I had an engine of this kind, and changed the oil every 1,000 miles, I should be throwing some £7 into the gutter, or rather placing it in the till of an oil syndicate. Many of us have owned cars which maintained their oil level for at least 2,000 miles and at the end of that distance the oil was to all appearance as good as new. Or take another common case. A certain car suffers from rather heavy oil consumption; some leaks out at imperfect joints; some is forced into the combustion chambers past inefficient rings, and burnt. Its owner adds a quart to the sump every 200 or 300 miles. Ought he to drain his sump every 1,000 miles, considering that the bulk of the contents have only been in use for a few miles?

* * *

Subject to three main considerations the oil in the sump of an engine need not deteriorate at all rapidly. There are three possible sources of contamination. Admixture of unburnt fuel is one of the commonest and worst. The duffer owner who uses his strangler liberally for starting purposes and the parsimonious fellow who buys a low grade fuel for the sake of economy, both infallibly adulterate their engine oil, and should drain the sump at short intervals. Leakage of water into the sump has evil effects. Such leakage will not normally occur with a good engine, or even with a second-rate engine handled by good mechanics. But if an owner driver makes a clumsy job of refitting a detachable cylinder head, such leakages are possible; and whenever they exist, the oil should not be retained for excessive mileages. Carbon is the third formidable enemy. Occasionally when an engine is dismantled, a thin deposit of fine-grained black soot will be found covering the valve heads and other parts of the combustion chamber which do not normally accumulate the typical heavy crusts of burnt oil. This carbon soot is a fuel deposit, and if it is noticeable in the combustion chamber, it will also be found in the oil in the sump. It is probably due to an over-rich mixture, which may be ascribed to a false setting of the carburettor, or to excessive use of strangling and tickling in starting up. Where it exists, the sump should be drained and replenished at normal intervals.

* * *

If on the other hand these three adulterants are not present, and the engine is provided with proper filters and purifiers, the necessity for frequent changes of oil may not exist. If the engine joints and piston rings fit well enough for a single filling to last several thousand miles, there is probably no urgency for replenishment. Under such conditions it is certainly wasteful to drain the engine every 1,000 miles, and 2,000 miles may safely be regarded as the minimum period. As the old garage maxim has it, oil is cheaper than bearings, and no risks should be run.

I am occasionally asked by owners whether it is safe to buy "back street" oils, marketed by firms who do not advertise in the motor journals nor subsidise racing men. A direct answer is hardly possible. There are men in the oil trade who know as much about lubricants as the staffs of the great companies whose names are household words wherever petrol is talked. Some of them are ready to sell engine oil "on the side" to personal friends and business associates. But it is always unwise to purchase unnamed lubricants from an unknown vendor. One might collect a golden Stock Exchange tip in a bar or a railway carriage; but it is far wiser to arrange one's investments on the advice of a good broker, or of a man whose position carries conviction. A good engine may be wrecked in a hundred miles by a bad lubricant; and wisdom suggests that we should limit our purchases to the products of specialist firms with a reputation to lose.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

PLAYTIME

THE SETEBOS CLUB IN COMMITTEE

BY CALIBAN

WE were all at the Club pretty early on Tuesday. Gonzalo took a cab from the City, and Miranda brought twice the usual ration of cakes. Only Prospero was absent, kept indoors by a cold. "A rheum of his own," said Alonso, on hearing the news.

In Prospero's absence, Stephano took the chair. "First business," he announced, "report by Trinculo on his Crossword."

"Nothing special to report," said Trinculo, endeavouring (unsuccessfully) to look modest. "Seems to have gone down all right. The Archdeacon approved of it; so did Lady Gower-Blimegh. Lady Gower-Blimegh, in fact, said she'd like to subscribe to the paper; if it weren't that the servants' hall might get hold of it."

"Mean old cat," said Miranda. "Now, about these competitions. I expect you know that Ferdy is a B.A. and —"

"Order, order!" from the Chair. "Have we finished with the Crossword? Anyone else got anything to say about it?"

"I liked it," declared Mrs. Gonzalo. We regarded her with some surprise. "No, I never *do* them, but I thought the verses so soothing. And with much more *in* them than this so-called modern stuff."

"My kid sister," said Stephano, "thought the whole thing too easy. Half of the clues, she says, were the merest sitters."

A grimace went round the room. Stephano's kid sister is the terror of our club. She is called Peronne (in commemoration, I understand, of some obscure occurrence in the War) and is one of those superior flappers who put the rest of us right; when Dean Inge gave an address at her school, she pronounced him "just too cute." "We ought either to strangle her," declares Gonzalo, "or to strangle everybody else."

But to get back to our Committee. "You made two blunders, Trinculo," I said. "Your squares were too small—my fiancée quite lost her temper with you—and the arrangement of your clues was hard to follow. Otherwise, no complaints."

"Both those things have been seen to," answered Trinculo, a trifle tetchily. "If I'd known there was to be this *post-mortem* —"

"Order, order," said Stephano again. "No wrangling, please. Next business, Acrostics."

"About these competit—" began Miranda.

"No, no, acrostics, if you please. What was your solution, Alonso?"

"What, couldn't you do it?" asked Miranda. "*I've* done it, though I don't think I've got it *all* right."

"My kid sister —" began Stephano.

"— did it in five minutes," snapped Alonso. "I'm sure she did. Well, here is the solution":

DOUBLE ACROSTIC

BY ALONSO

This is alive, and that, to-morrow's bringing;
Then hurry, spring, in gold and green arrayed.
Spring—to attention! Hark, in accents ringing,
The Colonel moves his troops from off parade.

1. *Of whom say I.*
2. *What's up, when rain is falling?*
3. *An Edison or Ford might fill the bill.*
4. *He's doglike, in the manner of his calling.*
5. *The flicks, by any name, will flicker still.*

Q	U	O	R	U	M	
U	M	B	R	E	L	L	A
I	N	V	E	N	T	O	R
C	Y	N	I	C		
K	I	N	E	M	A	T	O	G	R	A	P	H

"Very pretty," said Mrs. Gonzalo. "We *thought* there was some military allusion in it, didn't we, Gonzalo? But we couldn't think of anything but SLOPE ARMS, and that didn't seem to fit. Why, what's the matter with Miranda?"

Miranda was convulsed with laughter. "Look," she said,

Continued on page 82

THE

ROUND TABLE

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"here was my solution. I'd got it *all* wrong." And she handed us the following:

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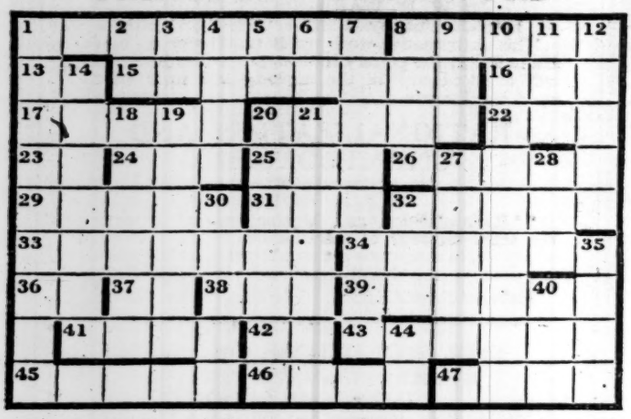
RAINOMETER
OPERA
c OLLIE
PAVILION

"A darned good effort," pronounced Alonso. "But I don't *quite* see Henry Ford in opera—and there aren't such things as rainometers, as far as I'm aware."

"I know," said Miranda sadly. "But then, you people are so clever. There's always the chance that my dictionary may be wrong."

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



(1, 15, 32, 33 and 34 across, and 10, 14 and 20 down are members of the Setebos Club. Their names are to be found in the *dramatis personæ* of Mr. Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*.)

ACROSS

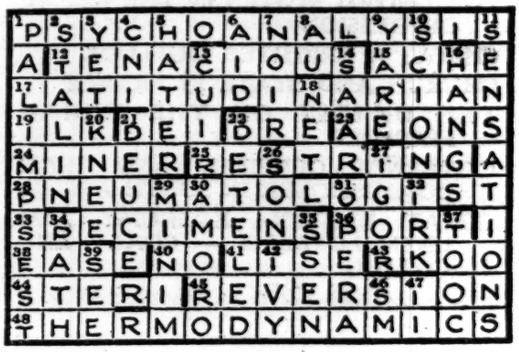
8. Inspiring, say, fear or respect.
13. The hound's lost his head, I expect.
16. An apple, a day—
Well, it's not quite for aye.
17. Now adorn we the Lord Mayor elect.
20. Let's hope that I've got the right ring.
22. Here's a chance for our brightest young thing.
23. Now twice, from midday,
We take nothing away.
24. A bow that's contorted I bring.
25. Here's labour unrest—over there.
26 *rev.* It's chili, high up in the air.
29. I'll serve—if I can—
For the oxygen fan.
31. A dance? Why, I've fifty to spare.
36 *rev.* "I said: I will 'list for a "—this.
37. And here I am 'listed, I wis.
38. From his rock, I suppose,
The holy man goes.
39. Mr. Niwdlab? There's something amiss.
41. They *have* made a mess of my steed.
42. Here flourishes graft, like a weed.
43. Reverse we the hunt.
45. Bring my "tee" to the front.
46. Related.
47. And pleasure's her meed.

DOWN

1. Here courtesans' rule has no end.
2. To Malachi my books extend.
3. No Sir, I must go.
4. My tower you all know.
5. Here's your finish unfinished, my friend.
6. O yes, I am all for the Pope.
7. Deprive you of courage and hope.
8. Heigh-ho! on his head
Stands a writer who's dead.
9. For her chick poor Minerva must grope.
11. A grape for Tiberius grew.
12. These things they allow me to do.
18. Take shelter from me.
19. Tnerappa rieh—see?
21. Here's the horse in Haig's latest *statoo*.
27. I can promise you plenty of wear.
28. My promont'ry isn't all there.
30. The bonny black tree.
32. A quart, please, for me.
35. They've eclipsed the ellipse, I declare.
40 *rev.* This is what Joan of Arc was, at first.
44. By Tirpitz with reason was cursed.

So finish our clues;
Let us hope they amuse
And that no honest solver's "reversed."

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

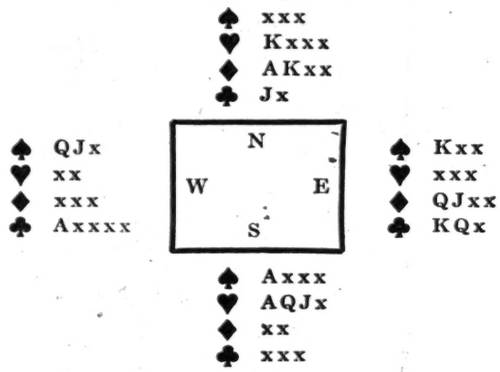


BRIDGE

BY CALIBAN

HOW TO BID AT CONTRACT: A SERIES OF ILLUSTRATIVE HANDS.

Hand II.: Supporting Partner's Suit.



When raising partner's suit, the important thing to remember is that *the full value of the supporting hand*—on the assumption that the original bidder's suit is made trumps—*must be shown at the first opportunity*. If my partner opens the bidding with One Heart, I assume, to begin with, that he has only the material for a One Heart bid, *i.e.*, 4 probable tricks if Hearts are made trumps, and *on this assumption* I show him how many tricks I think the combined hands are worth. A raise to Two Hearts therefore denies, by implication, my having the material to enable me to raise to Three Hearts.

If partner *rebids* his suit, I must of course reconsider the situation in the light of the better-than-minimum hand which he now discloses.

In the example given, the score is game-all. South deals and bids One Heart. West passes. North bids Three Hearts. East passes. South has a bare minimum bid, and therefore passes also; and the hand is played by South in Three Hearts. North-South should just make their nine tricks.

CALIBAN'S CONTRACT CAPTIONS.

Last week's:
Two honour tricks and a half you need,
Or your opening One-Bid won't succeed.
This week's:
Supporting partner's One-Bid, you
Must show him at once what you can do.

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1880	£803,000	£97,000
1890	£3,400,000	£508,000
1900	£11,900,000	£2,150,000
1910	£29,496,000	£7,800,000
1920	£99,900,000	£23,500,000
1930	£588,400,000	£120,900,000

THE RECORD FOR 1930.

New Life Business - -	£145,000,000
Assurances in Force - -	£588,000,000
Total Income - - -	£38,000,000
Payments to Policyholders and Beneficiaries in 1930	£17,000,000
Surplus and Contingency Reserve - - -	£7,500,000
Assets, at Dec. 31st, 1930	£120,900,000

THE SCOPE OF THE COMPANY'S SERVICE IN THE BRITISH ISLES

95,000 PEOPLE IN GREAT BRITAIN are protected to the extent of £48,000,000, which the Sun of Canada carries in trust on their behalf, to be paid at death or upon retirement.

£500,000 WAS ALLOTTED in dividends to policyholders in Great Britain during 1930.

12,700 PEOPLE IN GREAT BRITAIN received in the past year over £667,000 from the Sun of Canada in regular annuity payments.

£832,000 WAS PAID in Great Britain to policyholders and their dependants, on Endowment policies and Death Claims.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE HOME RAILWAY DÉBÂCLE—NATIONALISATION THE END?—UNDERGROUND AND THE LONDON TRAFFIC BILL

THE end of the home railway muddle will be nationalisation. This is not said to scare the impoverished investor, but I can see no other escape from the present débâcle. Who is satisfied with the existing conditions? The workers, if the rumour of a 5 per cent. cut in wages proves to be true, will be dissatisfied with the award of the National Wages Board this week. The stockholders are already disgruntled and displeased with their directors. And the directors have long been chafing under the limitations imposed on individual railway management. What impresses me is the growing divergence of interests between the four big groups on the one hand and between the suburban lines of the four big groups and the London traffic companies on the other. The London Midland and Scottish suffers from being tied to the "black spots" of industrial Britain —Lancashire and Lanarkshire. The London and North Eastern is little better off in serving the depressed heavy industries of the North-East Coast. The Great Western confesses to one industrial weakness—South Wales—but otherwise claims to have one of the best railway properties in Europe. The Southern is predominantly a passenger line, advancing by way of electrification, and withal catering for the "prosperous half" of England. Industries, as well as holiday-makers, are responding to the "Come South" advertisement. Incidentally, the Southern is reaping the benefit of cheap Kent coal, which is a stroke of sheer luck. All this means that the machinery of the Railway Rates Tribunal has broken down. One railway may want to cut rates while another may want to increase them. No two groups have the same problems. Indeed, the grouping effected by the Railways Act of 1921 is found out to be a commercial failure. It was not based on any scientific re-allocation of the railway mileage in Great Britain, but on a rearrangement of the pre-war ownership of capital. How can this mess be cleared up except by a centralised administration under State supervision?

* * *

The persuasiveness of Sir Josiah Stamp, who could pacify the unruly stockholders at the London Midland and Scottish meeting by declaring that his own salary was not worth a ham sandwich to them, must not be allowed to obscure the main issue. The railways may still be able to effect large economies. They have brought down their expenditures from the rate of £67,000,000 per annum before amalgamation to £56,000,000 in 1930. They can still do more. If they do not secure the 5 per cent. cut in wages, they can still dismiss staff ruthlessly and close down unremunerative branch lines. They might, for example, save money by refusing to carry Scotsmen beyond Perth, except in first-class carriages. Further north than that point, I am told, no passenger train in Scotland pays. But, when all the economies have been exhausted, it is evident that the London Midland and Scottish and London and North Eastern will never be able to earn their "standard" revenues as contemplated in the Railways Act. These two companies have far too much "watered" capital left over from the 1921 amalgamation. Last year, in spite of skilled management, they were only able to earn one-quarter of 1 per cent. on a total of £173,000,000 of ordinary and deferred ordinary stock. Yet they make matters worse by cheerfully paying out to their "equity" stockholders much more than the year's earnings. The London Midland and Scottish, for example, distributed £1,904,000 by way of a 2 per cent. dividend, and earned only £534,000 to meet it. And, in effect, all that Sir Josiah Stamp could say by way of excuse was that the ordinary stockholders needed the money. The dividend policy of the home railways has been the crowning folly of the great capital re-shuffle sanctioned by the Act of 1921.

* * *

The market in home railway stocks is cheerfully discounting, as I write, the prospect of a 5 per cent. cut in wages. Yet the investor is no less to be pitied than the worker, for he has been equally exposed, under the directors' improvident financial policy, to the storms of trade depressions. The capitalisation of the home railways takes the form of a high proportion of fixed interest stock to equity stock. According to the *Economist* every £1 of ordinary capital has the following amounts of fixed interest capital ranking in front of it—£3.35 for the London Midland and Scottish, £3.80 for the London and North-Eastern, £2.43 for the Great Western, and £1.65 for the Southern. Hence the full force of a trade slump falls upon the ordinary stockholders. If, for example, the net earnings of the London Midland and Scottish were to decline only 4 per cent. this year as compared with 1930, the ordinary stock would have no profits left. In boom periods a company with a low proportion of equity stock to total capitalisation can, of course, pay big dividends to the equity stockholders: but if it does, it can pay nothing in periods of slump. The only sound financial policy for such a company to adopt is to pay a relatively low initial dividend which can be maintained in bad times as well as good. But the home railway directors have consistently ignored the course of prudent finance with the result that the ordinary stockholders have seen the market prices of their stocks go up and down like the 1s. deferred shares of bubble companies. The following table gives the record of prices, earnings and dividends:

	Prices.			1930		Div.
	High 1930.	Present.	Earnings.	Divs.	Yields.
L. M. & S. ord.	57½	27½	½%	2%	7.4%
L. & N. E. pf. ord. ..	39	16	Nil	¼%	1.6%
G. W. ord.	94	68	4.8%	5½%	8.3%
South. def. ord.	32½	20½	1.0%	1½%	6.5%

* * *

It is curious that the London traffic companies, which have been soundly financed and very efficiently managed, should be the first of the home railways to have nationalisation imposed upon them. Lord Ashfield told the shareholders of the Underground Electric Railways last week that if the Bill to transfer ownership and control of the London traffic companies to a London Passenger Transport Board provided for the progress of the Underground group in the service of the public, for enterprise in management and for security of staffs, and at the same time afforded the proprietors a fair exchange of their stocks and shares for the stocks and shares of the Board, it was their duty to support the Bill. This is an enlightened and public-spirited attitude which is worthy of the Underground "chief." By way of contrast Lord Aberconway, at the general meeting of the Metropolitan Railway, could not refrain from grumbling over the hardship of being dispossessed of the "equity" by a Public Board. I fail to see why ordinary stockholders of the Metropolitan Railway should worry. The London Passenger Transport Board would presumably take over their railway business at a price and leave them their interest in the Surplus Lands ("Metroland") and in their new block of flats (Chiltern Court) which will not always be a "white elephant." In other words, Metropolitan Railway ordinary stock will have a speculative attraction without a railway complex. On the other hand, the Underground Electric Railways ordinary shares will have a more limited interest. That is why these shares remain at 24s. in spite of an 8 per cent. dividend, which allows a yield of nearly 7 per cent., and in spite of a cut in petrol prices which will make the London General Omnibus and its subsidiary, Green Line Coaches Ltd., all the more prosperous.

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Summary of Directors' Report for the year ended 31st December, 1930

Total Income for year **£11,180,351,** being an increase of **£395,478** over the previous year.

Total Assets at end of the year, **£49,368,247,** being an increase of **£3,422,542** during the year.

Total Claims Paid in the year, **£4,542,969.** The Company has paid **£66,023,623** in claims since its establishment.

The Total Assurances existing on December 31st, 1930, amounted to **£66,483,566** in the Ordinary Branch and **£93,046,796** in the Industrial Branch.

Reversionary Bonus of £2 4s. per cent. again declared on all Ordinary Branch participating Policies.

Industrial Branch: £164,948 Profits allocated to certain classes of Policyholders.

The Premium Income in the Ordinary Branch was **£4,011,168,** being an increase of **£93,157** over the previous year; and in the Industrial Branch it was **£4,941,590,** being an increase of **£202,416.**

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CHURCH ARMY

COMPANY MEETING

THE SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND AND LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY

THE one hundred and seventeenth Stated Annual Meeting of the Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society was held in the Society's Office, Edinburgh, on Tuesday, 3rd March, 1931, A. W. Robertson Durham, C.A., F.F.A. (Chairman of the Ordinary Court of Directors), presiding.

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, expressed his regret—which would be shared by all present—that the President, Lord Strathmore, was unable to be present and take the chair.

The Deputy Manager and Secretary read the notice convening the Meeting and the Minutes of the one hundred and sixteenth Stated Annual Meeting, held on 4th March, 1930, which were approved; and the Report and Accounts were taken as read.

In moving the adoption of the Report and Accounts the Chairman, after referring to the changes which have taken place in the directorate, said: In the year under review, we record a substantial increase in the new Assurances completed which amounted to the £10is sum of £3,720,000, of which £228,000 was reassured, leaving net new sums assured of £3,492,000. This represents an increase over the preceding year of £727,000 gross and £592,000 net after deduction of Re-assurances. The total of net new business constitutes a record in the Society's history, while the gross total has been exceeded only once, namely, in 1920. The increased new business, coming in a year of acute industrial depression, is particularly gratifying, and I think indicates a return to "Safety First" investment after the Stock Exchange boom of the preceding years.

The operations of the year have resulted in our Funds increasing by £739,000, and the total funds now stand at £29,019,014. The manner in which this large sum is invested is shown in the Balance-sheet, and does not I think, call for any detailed comment. In the speeches from this Chair in recent years we have referred to the policy of the Board in gradually reducing the large holdings in British Government securities as favourable opportunity offers and replacing them by suitable securities giving a higher yield. You will notice on this occasion the trend has been in the opposite direction. It is unnecessary to remind you that 1930 has been a peculiarly difficult year for all those responsible for the investment of large Funds. With falling money rates and so much uncertainty in different parts of the world, it has seemed desirable—at any rate for the time being—to increase our holdings in British Government securities. There has also been some increase in our holding in Ordinary Stocks which still form a very small percentage of our invested funds. I need hardly add that these stocks have been selected with the greatest care, and bearing in mind the Society's traditional reputation for caution. I referred last year to the special problems of 1929, and indicated that our stringent valuation of investments, made on the basis of the market selling prices at the end of the year, showed a substantial margin in the difference between the market values and the Balance-sheet figures. I am happy to be able to tell you that our valuation made on the same stringent basis, namely, the market selling prices as at 31st December last, shows that this margin increased materially during the year.

From time to time during the past twelve months there have been references in the press to a new type of family assurance. A feature of the scheme has been the provision of a temporary income to a widow in the event of the husband's death during the first 15 or 20 years after the issue date of the policy. Generally speaking, we do not favour special schemes. They are often more attractive in appearance than in actual effect. We have always recommended ordinary Whole-Life With-Profit Assurance for family provision purposes, and we still recommend it as giving the best value for premiums paid. Nevertheless, in the interests of our members we explore the possibilities of any new idea so that we may constantly offer the best which Life Assurance can provide. In pursuance of this policy we have considered the family income plan, and so convinced are we of the effective manner in which it provides for the peculiar and often difficult circumstances which surround the early years of married life that we have prepared a scheme under the title of the "INDEPENDENCE" policy. A copy of the booklet describing the scheme will be sent to members with the Annual Report. In it the "INDEPENDENCE" policy is fully described, but I wish to draw particular attention to two features which do, I believe, distinguish our scheme from all others. The first is an option which secures a fixed monthly income to the widow not only in the event of the husband's death during the first 15 years after the policy has been issued but even in the event of the husband's death after the family has grown up. A husband may thus have the comfortable feeling of having provided an assured income for life to his widow whenever his death may occur.

The second option, which so far as we know is unique, enables a man to provide for an increase in the family income on the birth of each child after the issue of the policy. All the father has to do in order to get this benefit is to give satisfactory replies to the questions on a "non-medical" proposal form, and to pay a small additional premium. I commend this new scheme strongly to our members, and ask them to read the booklet very carefully. If they would like further information we shall be glad to hear from them, but should the scheme for any reason not interest them or any member of their family, I ask them to make a point of passing on the booklet to one of their friends who is likely to be interested. In this way, they will be helping to do their share as members of this mutual Fund in promoting the business of their own Society.

The Directors' Report and the Accounts as audited were adopted unanimously.

COMPANY MEETING

SELFRIDGE & COMPANY

AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD.

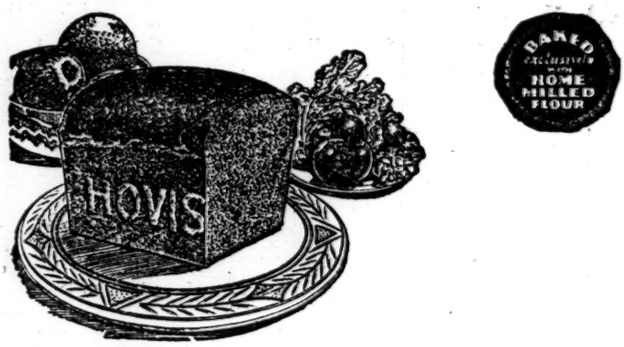
THE 23rd annual ordinary general meeting of Selfridge and Company, Ltd., was held on Thursday, February 26th, at the Company's Store, Oxford Street, W.

Mr. H. Gordon Selfridge (Chairman and Managing Director) presided, and, in moving the adoption of the report, said that the year 1930 started by showing reasonable increases in their returns over the corresponding periods of the previous year. The first six months were substantially on the right side, but the second six months were not so good. Prices continued to fall, and there was also a further decrease in the buying strength of the consuming public. Therefore, they had found it necessary to increase more than ever the number of customers, and in this they had been reasonably successful, for their figures showed that they had served several hundred thousand more customers than during any previous year. Notwithstanding that, there had been a small decline in their returns as compared with those of 1929.

Present day prices, in their Store at least, were continually being reduced as rapidly as their first cost of production made possible, but they still saw occasional public criticisms to the effect that retail prices were failing to keep pace with wholesale reductions. His contention was that the retail prices had followed those reductions which had been obtained from the manufacturers and had been quickly passed on to the public, and that the great Stores had been foremost in helping to reduce the cost of living. This was further proved by the fact that the gross profits per cent. of those Stores had been no greater and in many cases less than during previous years.

Within a month or two they would start a very great but not rapid scheme of premises enlargement. The Store was too small for their requirements, and the throngs of customers on their various floors were often almost too great. Leases for ninety years had been made, and they would begin very shortly a building on the corner of Duke and Somerset Streets, measuring about 230 x 200 ft. Inasmuch, however, as they would not require the entire completed building at once, they would build at the start only the ground floor and three basements. That structure they hoped to have at least partially ready for next Christmas trade. Then, as they required additional space, they would cover more land with their building, and add the upper storeys to those about to be built.

The report was adopted.



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COMPANY MEETING

THE UNDERGROUND

LONDON'S TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS

THE annual general meetings of the Metropolitan District Railway Company, London Electric Railway Company, City and South London Railway Company, Central London Railway Company, London General Omnibus Company, Ltd., Metropolitan Electric Tramways, Ltd., London United Tramways, Ltd., South Metropolitan Electric Tramways and Lighting Company, Ltd., London and Suburban Traction Company, Ltd., Underground Electric Railways Company of London, Ltd., were held on Thursday, February 26th, at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Ashfield, who presided, said:

We meet to-day under the shadow of proposals which may radically alter our relations one with another, for the Minister of Transport has given notice of a Bill by which he seeks to transfer the ownership and control of your several undertakings to a London Passenger Transport Board, and in exchange for your present stocks and shares to issue to you bonds or securities of different classes of this Board. Now we cannot help but pursue a consistent policy. We have always held that there were great advantages to flow from a co-ordination of all the means of passenger transport in the London traffic area, so that the planning of its development might take place on unified and well-considered lines and so that wasteful and injurious competition might be extinguished. In so far as the Minister of Transport has this in mind, he is entitled to our full support. But we must remind ourselves of our own history, because in that history, brief and recent though it be, can be learned the lessons which must guide the future of London transport. For I think it is fair to say that the Minister of Transport could not have brought forward his scheme if it had not been for the policy which we have pursued and executed in the last sixteen years, for it was in 1915 that the Act of Parliament was secured which first established our common fund, and so laid the wide and sure foundation upon which a more comprehensive structure could be built.

HEAVY TAXATION BURDENS.

Speaking of the allocation of revenue, the chairman said:

It may surprise you to learn that there is still another party interested in our results because of the share of the revenue which it obtains from them. I refer to the Government, central and local. In 1921 we paid in rates and taxes £601,896. In 1930 we paid almost exactly double, £1,210,135. Further, in 1921 we had thrust upon us statutory obligations for national insurance and other matters affecting our staff, costing £81,511. In 1930 these obligations had again almost doubled, amounting to £157,943. In addition, the companies voluntarily found £80,410 for the welfare of the staff in 1921 and £158,961 in 1930. Omitting what we paid voluntarily, in 1921 we paid out £683,407 to meet statutory demands made on us, and in 1930, £1,368,078, or £684,671 more.

It is true that our revenues meanwhile have increased, but while this increase measures only 23 per cent., the tolls which we pay to the Government have increased 100 per cent. The Government, central and local between them, without taking any risks in the business, now enjoys an aggregate return exceeding your return as shareholders. The result is, indeed, striking, and I must utter a clear word of warning that, so far as human foreknowledge can be trusted, we cannot see that these undertakings can be used as instruments for further taxation and, at the same time, fulfil their functions and their duty to the public and their employees. It must be borne in mind that that duty includes the constant expansion of the facilities afforded to the vast population of London for travelling to and from their daily occupations. It is a duty which the companies endeavour to fulfil, yet they cannot do so if they are deprived in an ever-increasing degree of their available surplus. It may be suggested that the loss by taxation should be made good at the expense of the travelling public; but we are satisfied that we should not add appreciably to our revenues by increasing our fares. The present scale of fares is, in our opinion, producing the maximum revenue possible. Or it may be suggested that the shareholders should bear the additional burden; but I would remind you that the return to those persons who have invested their money in these undertakings is still of a modest description, and no one can reasonably expect them to give up any part of that modest return in order to widen the extent of our activities.

TUBE FOR S.E. LONDON.

I should perhaps give you notice of yet another Bill which we hope to promote in the present session of Parliament, but for which we have not yet obtained the necessary consents. The Bill cannot be before us to-day, and therefore it will be necessary, in order that we may have your formal approval, to call you together again at a later meeting. If I explain this Bill to you at this present time, you will, if you agree with what I say, know that it will not be necessary for you to come to the further meeting, unless indeed you wish it—and we are always glad to see you—in order to pass the necessary resolutions. We have in mind to promote a Bill which will enable us to build an extension of the Bakerloo Section of the London Electric Railway from the Elephant and Castle to Camberwell Green, a distance of 1¾ miles, at a gross cost of £1,875,000 approximately.

We have come to this decision for two reasons. The London County Council will be executing works in the Elephant and Castle area which may throw upon us the obligation to re-build the Elephant and Castle Station of the London Electric Railway Company. We think, ourselves, that there is not sufficient traffic to warrant two stations being constructed in this area, and we can combine the present two stations in one if we construct this extension railway to Camberwell Green. The further reason is that we find ourselves in possession of capital monies for which we have no present programme of expenditure.

With your consent, we laid before Parliament last year an ambitious programme to extend and reconstruct the Piccadilly Section of the London Electric Railway, both on the north and on the west, and to equip its more important stations with escalators. This was the principal project. In support of this programme we were able to secure from H.M. Treasury an arrangement under which for fifteen years we should receive a grant, by way of contribution towards the interest payable on the expenditure to be incurred, at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum on so much of the expenditure as was actually represented by works. This sum was agreed provisionally as £9,917,000.

GREEN LINE COACHES.

Another venture of the year 1930 was the formation of a new company—Green Line Coaches, Ltd. The whole of the shares of this company are held by the London General Omnibus Company and it is to be regarded as one of its subsidiaries. So long as the motor coaches running in and out of London went long distances and charged fares on the basis of these long distances we could disregard them, but when they suddenly turned to running between the outskirts of Greater London and the centre, charging fares of 1s. and even less, we were compelled to take steps for the protection of our traffics.

PROPOSED TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS.

The coach business has come to stay. They have created a fresh class of traffic which was neither on the omnibuses nor in the railways. Some part has indeed been diverted from one or other, but some part represents that itch for movement which an efficient and convenient traffic facility creates. The public must be served.

What is wrong with the motor coach business is that it is being expanded on an uneconomic foundation, with reckless competition. Just as we have advocated co-ordination in transport when it was a matter of railways, tramways and omnibuses, so our advocacy cannot be less, but rather more, when a fourth factor—and that is the revolution which the last couple of years has wrought—must also be included. Let there be order in the use of the streets. Let there be control in the provision of services. Let there be economic equality established with other forms of transport, and the motor coach will take its fair and proper place in a complete system of transport. The Minister of Transport has the powers, under the Road Traffic Act of last year, which is a worthy memorial of his activity. Let him use them judicially and all will be well.

CO-ORDINATION OF LONDON TRAFFIC.

I must return once more to the important subject of the co-ordination of London traffic and say just a few further words to you about the scheme of the Minister of Transport. I am sorry that I can give you so little information, but although we have met the advisers of the Minister on several occasions, no concrete proposals have been put before us which it would be our duty to put to you. If you have read the newspapers you will know almost as much as we do about the Minister's intentions. This is not to accuse the Minister and his advisers of delay or neglect. The questions at issue are of extreme difficulty.

I am not surprised that a whole year should have slipped by since I last broached this subject to you, and still nothing definite has been formulated. I can commend the caution and care of the Minister, but until there is something specific upon which to proceed I can only reaffirm our policy—your policy as I venture to express it—that so long as the Minister's scheme will provide for the continued progress and expansion of the undertakings to serve the public, for enterprise and skill in management, for the security and welfare of the staffs which we employ, and at the same time will afford you a fair exchange for your stocks and shares, it will be our duty to assist and help him at every point. That exchange must give you protection against any impairment of your security so that your capital investment may remain intact and yield you a fair return, based upon what we have been able to provide for you under our present management, and for some equitable share in the future prospects of your undertakings.

THE ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT CO.

The results for the Associated Equipment Company are exceedingly satisfactory. The new models of both 'bus and commercial chassis which were first introduced to the public at the Commercial Vehicle Show, held in November, 1929, have met with a welcome reception and the number of orders received is showing a gratifying increase. The factory has been working to its full capacity throughout the year, and the order book at the end of the year gives assurance that the factory will be fully employed during the current year.

When you come to study the results for the present year, I am confident that you will find that economies in costs have been made which will offset the adversities which have diminished our traffic receipts, so that when next year I come to present to you the results for the year 1931 you will have no reason to be less satisfied with them than you should be with the results that I present to-day. Our spirit remains one of optimism. (Applause.)

The reports and accounts were adopted.

COMPANY MEETING

LONDON MIDLAND & SCOTTISH RAILWAY CO.

RESULTS OF THE YEAR'S WORKING

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRANSPORT

ELECTRIFICATION SCHEMES

SIR JOSIAH STAMP'S REVIEW

THE eighth annual general meeting of the London Midland and Scottish Railway Company was held on February 27th, at Euston Station, London, N.W. 1, Sir Josiah Charles Stamp, G.B.E., chairman of the company, presiding.

The Chairman said:—Not only in Great Britain, but throughout the world last year was one of extremely bad railway traffics as a result of the world-wide depression in trade. While, as compared with 1929, the loss of receipts in this country was not so severe as abroad, it has to be remembered that we have been comparing with a series of bad years, due to the position at home, and the combined effect was to make 1930 probably the worst year since the opening of the railways constituting our undertaking. While all the British railways suffered, our undertaking suffered most, owing to its predominating interests in Lancashire, Lanarkshire, and the Northern industrial area.

There are some o talk scoffingly of railway economies, but a reduction of railway expenditure from the rate of £67,000,000 per annum immediately before amalgamation to £56,900,000 in 1930 is a very considerable achievement, especially as two-thirds of the 1930 expenditure was for labour and the rates of wages have not fallen materially. This economy was accompanied by a marked improvement in the service afforded to the public, and without a reduction of the standard of maintenance and safety.

Your Board gave very close consideration to the rate of dividend on the Ordinary stock to be recommended to you. They had to balance the desirability of continuing a dividend of not less than 3 per cent., because of its possible effect upon the Trustee status of the prior stocks, against the undesirability of making the very large call, which would have been necessary, upon the general reserve fund for 1930, and possibly for the year 1931 also, failing a great improvement in trade and favourable issues from the present proceedings in regard to the labour rates and conditions of service. The importance of conserving the general reserve in the interests of all classes of stockholders was overriding.

On the actual results of the year's working a dividend of a little over 1 per cent. could have been paid, as the profits on investments and the income-tax adjustment mainly arose in 1930. It was felt, however, that the Ordinary stockholders of the company, who have suffered severely by the course of trade in recent years, were entitled to receive some further payment, and after very full consideration of the position the recommendation to make a payment for the year of 2 per cent. was decided upon.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRANSPORT.

The final Report of the Royal Commission has now been issued, and deals with co ordination and development of transport.

I would like to pay a tribute to the manner in which the Commission have handled the vast and complicated question remitted to them. Their report is most valuable, and the views expressed about the railways will receive the careful attention they undoubtedly call for.

In general, I may say that the only points on which we consider there is much more to be said are those where, without taking specific evidence from the railways, adverse conclusions have been reached. Perhaps I may refer briefly to one or two. I preface my remarks by expressing the appreciation we all feel of the very full recognition accorded railway companies of the services they have rendered, and are rendering, to the country.

I take first the statement that, practically speaking, there has been no improvement in locomotive speeds during the last eighty years. This question was not raised when I was before the Commission giving evidence for the railways, and I do not think they would have expressed themselves quite in that form had they had the full facts before them.

The Commissioners appear to have come to their conclusion on certain information regarding one or two trains eighty years ago, and, even if the facts are right regarding these, they are hardly adequate data to apply to the 12,000 or 13,000 trains we run daily—even in the winter months. They also entirely ignore the fact that the trains of eighty years ago are not comparable with those of modern times. In regard to weight, comfort of passengers, safety, &c., the trains of to-day are as different from those of eighty years ago as are the motor-cars of twenty-five years ago from those of to-day; but I will continue to confine my remarks to the question of speed.

In the summer of 1930 there were on the L.M.S. thirty-five express passenger trains running daily distances of upwards of 100 miles without a stop, including the two non-stops of 300 miles between Euston and Carlisle, whilst the fastest scheduled speeds between the following points ranged from:—

55.53 m.p.h., 10.0 a.m., Liverpool to Euston, between Mossley Hill and Euston.

56.04 m.p.h., 10.40 a.m., Euston to Liverpool, between Euston and Stafford; to

59.18 m.p.h. between Willesden and Birmingham with the 9.10 a.m., Euston to Wolverhampton;

to quote only three trains.

For general travel I would instance that thirty-three trains between London and Birmingham, Liverpool, Leicester, and Kettering had a lower average running speed in 1913 than the 53.78 miles per hour of forty trains in 1930.

The longest non-stop in the summer of 1913 was the 11.10 a.m., Euston to Rhyl, a run of 209 miles. We now have several trains with an average non-stop run of 265 miles over the western section of our railway.

In the face of these particulars it cannot be said that this company has had no regard to the speed of express passenger trains.

RAIL AND ROAD TRANSPORT.

In 1928 we acquired our road powers; in 1929 we made our financial arrangements with the chief existing interests, and in 1930 the progressive policy of co-ordinating railway and road passenger transport throughout the area of the L.M.S. system has been firmly begun. There are now few of our districts, other than London, in which we have not a measure of common interest with the principal omnibus operating companies, and where the railway and road officers are not in close collaboration in regard to traffic arrangements to ensure the most effective employment of the joint resources.

WIDENING AND ELECTRIFICATION BETWEEN BARKING AND UPMINSTER.

Good progress is being made with the construction of the new lines for electric traction between Barking and Upminster, a distance of 7¼ miles. At present electric train services operated by agreement with the District Company between London and places on our L. T. and S. line, terminate at Barking, and these works will enable electric train services to be extended to Upminster. This widening and extension of electric services was necessary in order to deal with the rapidly increasing local traffic, particularly in connection with the London County Council's Housing Estate at Becontree. This scheme provides for at least 26,000 houses, of which we understand 19,500 have been constructed.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH JUNCTION AND ALTRINCHAM JOINT RAILWAY.

The M.S.J. and A. Railway is owned jointly with the L. and N. E. Company, and in 1928, consequent upon the decline in the local passenger traffic by reason of acute tramway and omnibus competition, and developments taking place along the route, we decided jointly to equip the railway between Manchester (London Road) and Altrincham for an electric suburban passenger service, the total estimated cost being approximately £470,000. The indications were that our revenues from local passenger traffic would continue to fall increasingly unless we afforded a greatly improved service, and it was estimated that the provision of an electric passenger service would, within a period of five years, enable us not only to retain our present carryings, but increase them to a remunerative extent.

The scheme includes new stations at Dane Road (Ashton-on-Mersey) and Navigation Crossing (Altrincham), and the equipment and opening of the Old Trafford Cricket and Football Ground Station as a permanent residential station. The work has to interfere as little as possible with existing traffic, but the progress made encourages the hope that the electric services will be in full operation in from four to six months' time.

Schemes have been under consideration for the electrification of a number of other provincial suburban lines, but we have not been able, so far, to ensure remunerative arrangements.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

The eminent scientists whose names I gave you last year are now actively associated with us; the Advisory Committee on Scientific Research began its work last July, and the advantages of close association between the technical officers and outside members are being increasingly felt. The research work which the Committee has inaugurated is directed towards the problems of urgent practical importance, such as increasing the durability of the paint on carriages and the reduction in the wear of rails and tyres. Quite apart from these major investigations, the frequent informal discussions between members of the Committee will undoubtedly help us to solve some of our less outstanding problems. We have also had a small joint Committee investigating the questions of locomotive water and fuel economy, and the work dealing with water promises to yield early results of considerable benefit to the company.

FUTURE PROSPECTS.

Although we are in touch with nearly all the industries and interests of the country, and have ample opportunity for making a general survey, it is not the custom at our annual meetings, as it is with the big banks, to give any extended analysis of our industrial and economic position.

That the outlook for British industry is difficult and perplexing beyond all experience there is no doubt whatever. One difficulty I have in publicly making a frank and balanced estimate is that our own British people tend, by complacency and Micawber-like resilience, not

to accept unfavourable judgments at face value, but to divide the result by three, while at the same time foreign observers, by lack of understanding of our psychology, multiply it by three. As soon as our people have the collective wisdom to readjust our costs and standards to the competitive levels of our output; to recognise new conditions of markets and industrial methods; to come out of a fool's paradise of social expenditure, it will be found that the underlying strength of Britain's position is still very great indeed. The readjustment must come soon, for that strength is being rapidly undermined.

The revenue available for your Ordinary stock is exceedingly sensitive to the total trade and production of the country—it may be said that a change of approximately 2 per cent. in that trade volume has an effect of 1 per cent. on the potential dividend.

This arises from the fact that a very large proportion of expenditure does not change with traffic, and out of every £100 in receipts only the last £20 is available for a return on all our capital, of which not more than £5 goes to Ordinary stock, which thus bears the brunt or enjoys the boon of the fluctuations on the whole £100.

It is thus impossible for me in the uncertain outlook—it is only certain that our traffic receipts for 1931 are already nearly £997,000 below last year—to prophesy, even if the outcome of the applications to the National Wages Board on the subject of wages were known to me. But what is abundantly clear is that the great economies we have made, which have been so far swamped by the large decrease in traffics and charges, are to an important extent permanent, and if your economic case before the National Wages Board receives proper recognition we shall be in a good position to reap the advantage of a revival in trade, when it comes, in its effects upon our balance of net revenue available for the Ordinary stock.

The resolution was adopted, and the dividend payments, as recommended, were approved.

RNLI

THIS WEEK'S ANNIVERSARY

LIFE-BOAT SERVICES OF THE PAST:

On March 6th, 1917, the Life-boat at Eyemouth, Berwickshire, rescued seven men from the Norwegian schooner "Livlig" in a whole gale with a very heavy sea. The Coxswain was awarded the Bronze medal for his gallantry.

THIS WORK HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR 106 YEARS.

Over 623,000 lives rescued. 11 LIVES EVERY WEEK!

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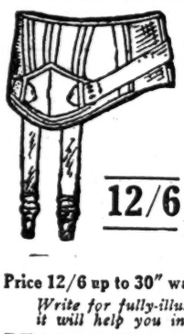

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COMPANY MEETING

LONDON TIN CORPORATION, LIMITED

TIN INDUSTRY RATIONALISED AT LAST.

AN IMPORTANT EMPIRE ASSET PRESERVED.

A BRIGHTER OUTLOOK.

The annual general meeting of the London Tin Corporation, Ltd., was held on the 4th inst. at River Plate House, Finsbury Circus, London, E.C.

Mr. John Howeson, the Chairman, who presided, pointed out that as recently as eighteen months ago the utter lack of organisation left the tin industry at the mercy of every successive wave of depression. In the Dutch East Indies two single producers supplied annually half the quantity produced in the F.M.S., and were so well organised as to be capable of surviving under conditions which would bring Malaya to its knees. With that fact in mind British producers had just cause to commend the recently concluded International Convention to which the Dutch authorities were parties.

Without that agreement and with the continuance of the futile process of sectional annihilation, a large part of the Empire production would have been bankrupted. Shareholders in that Corporation, which controlled by far the largest body of British production, had good reason to acclaim the victory that had been won—a victory of sane and progressive counsels.

Normal economic conditions had been upset and under-consumption prevailed; and the tin industry, weary of waiting for the law of supply and demand to right its trouble, had met the inevitably reduced demand by rationing production. Another result of the International Agreement would be the supply of funds for a vigorous programme of research and development. Restriction of output should be regarded as a temporary means of safeguarding the industry; expansion of demand was more important.

So far as the Corporation itself was concerned, the net profit transferred to appropriation account was £274,290. Deducting from the total sum available—£312,752—the proposed allocations to reserve, etc., and allowing for the interim distributions already made, there would be a balance of £97,964, which the board recommended should be carried forward.

As to the future, the Chairman thought they might fairly take a more optimistic view than would have been justifiable at any time during the past eighteen months. The initial quotas of the four signatory countries were fixed at 36,000 tons a year less than 1929—a stringent cut seeing that over-production in 1930 was only 14,000 tons—and compared with the heavily restricted output of 1930, there was a further reduction of no less than 20,000 tons. Moreover, the immediate objects of the International Agreement were stability and a fair price, and the intelligent handling of the present stock position was therefore a necessary corollary to the regulation of outputs. The leading producers in all countries would take steps to make sure that that important task was not left unfulfilled.

EQUILIBRIUM WITHOUT DELAY.

The figures he had cited and the comparisons he had drawn were based upon the initial quotas for which the scheme provided. Those figures showed that under all ordinary circumstances the desired equilibrium would be attained without difficulty or delay, and that the requirements of consumers would gradually make some inroad into the stocks. A steady increase in the price until it regained an equitable level was therefore assured. Nobody could wish that the climb should be unduly steep, and nobody desired that the stocks should melt away too rapidly. That would destroy all prospect of the stability which was a cardinal objective of the scheme.

On the other hand, it was clear that enforced curtailment must be compensated by a corresponding improvement in the price; and if altogether unforeseen conditions should arise, or if for any other reason the essential equilibrium should be slow to materialise, the quotas would be varied as might be necessary to ensure the complete success of the scheme. He would say, therefore, without any doubt in his mind, that the scheme would succeed in its purpose. They could not, of course, afford to antagonise their customers, but the objects of the scheme were no less desirable in their interest than in that of the producing industry.

He had had the advantage at various times of discussing these matters with some of the principal consumers and also with leading metal interests in the United States, and he had no hesitation in saying that they were altogether opposed to uneconomic prices. They recognised that, while the present civilisation endured, there must be a constant increase in the demand for all basic products. They had no wish to purchase their requirements of tin at below production cost; on the contrary, they preferred, and they said so categorically, that all essential producers should make a reasonable profit, so that there might be adequate inducement to provide for the increasing needs of the future.

It was a fundamental error also to suppose that there was any opposition, or any danger of opposition, on the part of their friends and best customers across the Atlantic to a regulated output aiming at a fair equilibrium between supply and demand. But they did take exception to the violent oscillations in price which had so constantly disturbed all their arrangements in the past and, in so doing, had recklessly stimulated the search for substitutes and encouraged the proponents of other metals to enter the field against them.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.